

**TOWARDS A THEOLOGY OF CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION:
A STUDY OF RELIGIOUS CONFLICT IN CONTEMPORARY
NIGERIAN SOCIETY**

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work and constitutes the results of my research in the subject. All quotations have been distinguished by quotation marks or by block quotes in the main text of the thesis, and the sources of information specifically acknowledged by means of footnotes.

Israel Adelani Akanji

ABSTRACT

Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa, is bedevilled with various conflicts which have been exacerbated by the multiplicity and diversity which characterize the nation. The country is a multi-ethnic, multicultural, multiregional and multi-religious society. And while such arrays of features are not peculiar to Nigeria, managing them has greatly propped up various conflicts, with religious conflict emerging as one of the most devastating of all. It would appear as though, more than any other single issue, religious conflict has become a threat to national cohesion, stability and development. It has led to fears, suspicions, unrest; mass displacement of people, destruction of lives and property; consequently leading to major set-backs for nation building.

The three main religions of Nigeria are the Indigenous Religions, Islam and Christianity, with Islam and Christianity having almost equal strength of adherence. While the indigenous religions have generally been tolerant and accommodating of the two “guest” religions, contestations and incessant violent clashes have characterized the relationship between Muslims and Christians, particularly in Northern Nigeria, and this has been on the increase in frequency, intensity and sophistication. This situation has led to the emergence and deployment of numerous approaches towards transforming conflicts in order to ensure peaceful co-existence of all the people. The task of this thesis is to contribute practical, theological reflections to the ongoing search for how Nigeria will end the undesired religious conflict between Muslims and Christians and build a peaceful and harmonious society.

To do this, John Paul Lederach’s conceptual framework for conflict transformation was adopted and explained in chapter one; and two religious conflicts which took place in the Northern Nigerian cities of Jos and Maduguri were empirically investigated through intensive fieldwork. A review of relevant literature was carried out in chapter two and an elaborate explanation of the socio-scientific and theological methodologies adopted for the research was presented in the third chapter. In order to establish the causes, manifestations and consequences of the conflicts, chapter four and five explored their remote and root causes. Because this research is grounded on the assumption that religion is not just a source of conflict, but a resource for peace, and on the contribution of faiths to contemporary public

debates, it provides a new approach which challenges the religious institutions, particularly the Church, through its pastoral ministry, to become actively involved in the transformation of conflict in the nation. The research holds that the greatest contribution of religion to the quest to transform religious conflict in Nigeria is through a practical theology which should be demonstrated in both spirituality and strategy. As such, and based on empirical findings from the zones of conflict, a theology of hospitality is suggested in chapter six, as a gradual but effective method of transforming relationships between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria. While the approach does not preclude other approaches, it offers the enormous resources, possibilities and opportunities, ingrained within the religious domain for conflict transformation in contemporary Nigerian society. The strategies for achieving the desired transformation of the situation of conflict on short and long-term basis through the theology of hospitality are suggested in the seventh chapter.

DEDICATION

TO

THE GLORY OF GOD

And

THE MEMORY OF MY PARENTS

REV AND MRS TIMOTHY ADETORO AKANJI

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- AAA - American Arbitration Association
- AACC – All African Council of Churches
- ACAA - Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service
- ADR - Alternative to Dispute Resolution
- AFRC - Armed Forces Ruling Council
- AG - Action Group
- AIDS - Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
- ATR – African Traditional Religion
- AU – African Union
- BBC - British Broadcasting Corporation
- BRTV – Borno Radio and Television
- CAN - Christian Association of Nigeria
- CCN – Christian Council of Nigeria
- CEPAN – Centre for Peace Advancement in Nigeria
- CMS – Church Missionary Society
- COCIN – Church of Christ in Nigeria
- CRK - Christian Religious Knowledge
- CSN - Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria
- DFI - Dialogue with men of other Faiths and Ideologies
- EATWOT - Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians
- ECWA – Evangelical Church of West Africa
- EKAN - *Ekkilisian Kristi a Nigeria*
- EYN - *Ekklesiyar Yan’uwa a Nigeria*

FBO - Faith-Based Organizations

FCMS - Federal Conciliation and Mediation Service

FCT - Federal Capital Territory

FGD Focus Group Discussion

FSCA - Federal Sharia Court of Appeal

H/JDPC - Health/Justice Development and Peace/Caritas

HIV - Human Immunodeficiency Virus

HRVIC - Human Rights Violations Investigation Commission

IAP - Islam in Africa Project

IMC - Inter-faith Mediation Centre

INTER-GENDER - International Centre for Gender and Social Research

JCA - Joint Church Aid

JDPC - Justice, Development and Peace/Caritas Committee

JIBWIS - *Jama'atu Izalatil Bid'ah Wa Iqamati Sunnah*

JMA - *Jamiyar Mutanen Arewa*

JNI - *Jamatu Nasril Islam*

JPC - Jos Peace Conference

KPD - Kaduna Peace Declaration

LGA – Local Government Area

LGC – Local Government Council

MCDF - Muslim-Christian Dialogue Forum

NACOMYO - National Council of Muslim Youth Organizations

NAPEP - National Poverty Eradication Programme

NCNC - National Convention of Nigerian Citizens

NCRA - National Council for Religious Affairs

NEMA - National Emergency Management Agency

NEPU -Northern Elements Progressive Union

NGO – Non Governmental Organization

NIREC -Nigeria Inter-Religious Council

NPC - Northern People’s Congress

NSCIA - Nigerian Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs

NT - New Testament

NTA – Nigerian Television Authority

NUJ – Nigerian Union of Journalists

OAIC – Organization of African Independent Churches

OAS - Organization of American States

OIC – Organization of Islamic Conference

OT - Old Testament

PBH – Peace Be on Him

PFN – Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria

PIAC - Project Implementation and Advisory Committee

PPC - Plateau Publishing Company

PROCMURA - Project for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa

PRTV – Plateau Radio and Television

PSC - Protracted Social Conflict

RCM – Roman Catholic Mission

RNC - Royal Niger Company

SAP - Structural Adjustment Programme

SIM - Sudan Interior Mission

SPDR - Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution

SSS - State Security Service

SUM - Sudan United Mission

UN – United Nations

UNESCO - United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization

VOA – Voice of America

WCC – World Council of Churches

WESIOMO - West Joint Muslim Organization

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MAP OF NIGERIA



CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa, is situated on the west coast of sub-Saharan Africa, with a population of over 120 million people and approximately 374 ethno-linguistic groups.¹ The major ethnic groups are the Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba, concentrated in the north, east and west, respectively. This West African country spreads over an area of about 923,770 square kilometres and lies within the tropics, bound in the north by the French Niger Republic (in the Sahara Desert), in the south by an arm of the Atlantic Ocean, namely, the Gulf of Guinea; on the east by the Cameroons and Lake Chad and on the west by the French territory of Benin Republic. Probably the most prominent physical features of Nigeria are the Niger and Benue rivers, with a confluence in Lokoja, near the centre of the country and flowing into the Gulf of Guinea.²

Nigeria is a product of British colonization, woven together in 1914 by the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Protectorates, with Sir Fredrick Lugard as its first Governor General and Lagos as its capital. The name 'Nigeria', which was adopted for the country, was first suggested sixteen years ahead of the amalgamation by Flora Shaw, in an article in the *Times* in which she proposed that the several British Protectorates on the Niger should be known collectively as Nigeria.³ On October 1, 1960, Nigeria gained independence and began an unsteady process of nationhood.

¹ Afe Adogame, "Nigeria", *Encyclopaedia of Religion and War*, 2004, p 228. In Robert I. Rotberg's "Nigeria: Elections and Continuing Challenges", (CSR No. 27, April 2007, p.3), the population of Nigeria is estimated at 150 million .

² Adewale Segun Banjo in *Through Life With Water: The Roots of Division and the Potential for Reconciliation in Africa* eds. Erik Doxtader and Charles Villa-Vicencio (Asamara: African World Press, 2003), 89.

³ Michael Crowder, *The Story of Nigeria* (London: Faber & Faber Ltd, 1978), 11.

One dominant feature of Nigeria is its intrinsic diversity in almost every sphere of life. The numerous ethnic groups, languages, cultures and religious persuasions, constitute a complex multiplicity which has been of no small challenge to the Nigerian state. These diverse groups cover the thirty six states of the country without exception, though there are regions with more diversity than others. Of importance to this study are the different religious traditions in Nigeria which include the indigenous religions, Islam and Christianity, in their various forms. Of these three, Islam and Christianity are the major ones, although each of them is greatly influenced by the indigenous religions. There is no consensus on the Islam and Christian populations in Nigeria as a range of figures is used by various representations, depending on what fits their scheme. While some give Islam a higher percentage of the population, others favour Christianity. Regrettably, Census results have been controversial in Nigeria and there are no mutually acceptable demographic data to the adherents of the two dominant religions.

In the 2006 National Census, when it was hoped that the improved electronic devices would reveal the religious demography of the country, the Federal Government excluded both ‘ethnicity’ and ‘religion’ from the census variables.⁴ Christians vehemently opposed this and it took the persuasion of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) to encourage them to participate in the election. Addressing the issue, the national President of CAN, Most Revd Peter Akinola, said:

We do appreciate the fact that at this stage of our national development, peace is absolutely necessary for realizing our dreams and aspirations. It is in view of this that Christians in Nigeria agreed to participate in the forth coming National Census as [a] sacrifice for the peace and progress of this nation, in spite of our protest over the non-inclusion of Religion and Ethnicity as necessary demographic data.⁵

The above makes one appreciate the state of affairs concerning the religious data of the Nigerian populace. Thus, Adogame argues that “As there are no concise official figures, the unauthentic percentages of Christians and Muslims are projected between

⁴ Ogoh Alubo, *Ethnic Conflicts and Citizenship Crises in the Northern Region* (Ibadan: Programme of Ethnic and Federal Studies, 2006), 1.

⁵ Peter Akinola, “Reaction of the President of the Christian Association of Nigeria, The Most Revd Peter Akinola on Recent Events in Nigeria”, *The Anglican Communion News Service*, ACNS (Nigeria: February, 2006)

40-50 percent for either of the traditions depending on the information source”.⁶ The oscillation between 40 – 50 percent for either of the two religions is therefore the current trend in most academic discourses.

The navigation between religion and politics in Nigeria has greatly centralized the place of religion in the development of the nation. This is replete in the virulent contest for the sharing of the ‘national cake’. As such, government moves are closely monitored by both Christians and Muslims and perceived favouritism of either religious group is challenged with dispatch. This political significance of religions, coupled with the growing uncompromising Muslim and Christian activism, has increasingly damaged cordiality between the adherents of the two religions, producing a growing culture of intolerance and religious violence, predominantly in Northern Nigeria.⁷ Religious conflicts have therefore revolved mainly around the activities and relationships between Christians and Muslims. These conflicts have increased in number, frequency and intensity, resulting in loss of lives, destruction of property, fears, suspicion, distrust, displacement of people, and constituting a major hindrance to the development of the nation. And although Nigeria never engaged in warfare to gain independence, nothing has so heinously threatened its process of nationhood like the violence which has characterized post-independent Nigeria.

In view of the situation, a series of attempts has been made in search of solutions to the conflicts in Nigeria, involving several conflict intervention approaches by both government and private sectors. Despite all these ripostes, new religious conflict challenges emerge everyday. As a result, religious groups and individuals have become very concerned and series of questions are being asked. For instance, Church members keep asking what their response should be to the continual destruction of Church buildings, loss of lives, property and unrest, which have characterized the religious conflicts. Many have questioned Church leadership on what should be done after ‘both cheeks have been slapped.’ Concerns have been raised on the seeming impunity with which religious conflicts have been attended in the country. Nigerians have asked when a lasting solution would be found to these incessant religious

⁶ Adogame, “Nigeria”, 328.

⁷ Ibid., 329-330.

polemics. These concerns have necessitated the search for fresh methods in looking at the problem of religious conflict in Nigeria. The task of this thesis therefore includes examining some of the approaches which have been employed in handling conflict in Nigeria and suggesting a theological approach for conflict transformation in contemporary Nigerian society. Theological scholars have always recognized that theology needs other disciplines and they have always hoped that other disciplines would recognize their need of theology. Consequently, it is anticipated by this study that other specialists who have made efforts in conflict intervention and mitigation will recognize their need of theology in the struggle for a lasting solution to conflict in Nigeria.

In order to achieve this, two religious conflicts between Muslims and Christians in Northern Nigeria were investigated. These are: the Jos religious mayhem of September 7-12, 2001 and the February 18, 2006 religious violence in Maiduguri. The nature of these conflicts was studied and based on the findings; a theology of conflict transformation was suggested. It was discovered that while the Jos conflict was perceived to be 'internally' generated, the conflict of Maiduguri was triggered by the 'external' issue of the publication of the contentious cartoon of Prophet Mohammed in Denmark.⁸ And while the Jos conflict involved both Muslims and Christians engaging in acts of violence, the Maiduguri conflict was found to be an attack on Christians by Muslims.

In this thesis reflections were carried out on a theology of hospitality as a contribution to the search for the transformation of conflict in contemporary Nigerian society. This has been suggested as a spirituality and strategy for the Church's involvement in conflict transformation. This is germane for Nigeria in keeping with Karen Armstrong's view concerning the unprecedented eruption of violence in the twentieth century. She says:

Unless there is some kind of spiritual revolution that can keep abreast of our technological genius, it is unlikely that we will save our planet. A purely rational education will not suffice...Auschwitz, Rwanda, Bosnia and the destruction of the

⁸ Col MS Abubakar affirmed: "That there are possible external factors to the growing trends of religious extremism and fundamentalism cannot be easily dismissed", *Religious Extremism as a National Security Problem: Strategies for Sustainable Solutions*, Senior Executive Course No. 28. National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, Kuru, p.2.

World Trade Center were all dark epiphanies that revealed what can happen when the sense of the sacred inviolability of every single human has been lost.⁹

Such a spiritual revolution reinforces the need for a practical theology which will inform Nigerian society on the desirability of the sacred in the pursuit of peaceful coexistence.

Statement of the Problem

Conflict is a product of human relationships, therefore, an inevitable and integral part of human life. Its ubiquitous nature makes it a concern of all people, bringing about various creative responses to its management, regulation, resolution and transformation. There is no doubt that Nigeria, like many other complex societies, has experienced conflicts of various types. Part of Nigeria's complexity stems from its multiplicity and diversity. Osaghae described the country as a "mosaic of diversities"¹⁰ and Soroma depicts it as "a sociological mixed grill".¹¹ Illuminating on this complex pluralism, Afigbo emphasized the non-static nature of diversity in which diversity breeds diversity.¹² This striking pluralism must be at the background of any investigation of the Nigerian state because it is the foundation upon which the diverse challenges of national integration are built.

While multiplicity and diversity are not unique to Nigeria, both the management and the exploitation of these exigencies for selfish benefits have resulted in copious violent conflicts in the country. For instance, in addition to the Nigerian Civil War (1967-1970) which was rooted in ethnic divide and threatened to vanquish the nation, numerous communal and ethnic conflicts have occurred. Prominent among these are the conflicts of the Hausa and the Kataf of Zango Kataf (1992), the protracted conflicts and violence among the Jukun and Tiv of Benue and Taraba States, the Bassa and Ebira of Nassarawa State, the long standing Ife-Modakeke conflicts in

⁹ Karen Armstrong, *The Great Transformation* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), xi.

¹⁰ E.E. Osaghae, "Federal Character: Past, Present and Future" in *Federal Character and Federalism in Nigeria* eds. P.P Ekeh and E.E Osaghae (Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books, 1989), 442.

¹¹ M. Soroma, "National Integration and Political Stability in Nigeria: A Survey of Problems and Prospects", M.Sc Thesis, London School of Economics and Political Science, University of London, 1983.

Osun State, the Chambe/Kuteb crisis of Taraba State, the numerous ethnic, communal and economic conflicts of the Niger Delta, and of course, the recurring religious conflicts which have characterized the Northern part of the country.

Also, the demands for economic dominance and participation, and the resistance to the same, have employed both ethnicity and religion as instruments of aggression, vexation and violence. The massive socio-economic decline and the failure of the state to salvage it have led many Nigerians to seek solace for their deprivations and frustrations from religious and ethnic identity groups. Consequently, religious and ethnic conflicts sometimes occur when indeed the question is one of economic interest. Egwu said that “ethnicity and religion may merely serve as [a] smokescreen for socio-economic cleavages”.¹³ Also, the wide gap between the literate and the illiterate, the poor and the rich and the perceived unjust and inequitable system of governance, particularly as regards power sharing and the clamour for resource control, have become fertile soil for cultivating and nurturing diverse conflicts in the nation. Of such conflicts, religious conflicts, which now be-devil Nigeria, have taken a most bemoaning form.

Religion in Nigeria today has emerged with such sensitive force that it threatens the corporate existence of the country through conflict generation. This religious conflict phenomenon is itself a multifarious issue and difficult to examine in isolation or at face value. For while inter-religious conflicts are generally known to all, intra-religious conflicts are also common and they sometimes lead to inter-religious discordances. Also, studies have shown that many conflicts which were fought in the name of religion had other reasons behind them. For example, contentions between peasants and nomads, caused by the invasion of farmlands by cattle, have led to religious conflict. Again it is common that some other kinds of conflicts, like ethnic, political or even personal conflicts, have been religiously motivated. This trend is not unusual in conflict. There are usually remote (deep rooted) and immediate (trigger)

¹² A.E. Afigbo, *Federal Character: Its Meaning and History* in *Federal Character and National Integration in Nigeria*, ed., Ukwu I. Ukwu (Kuru: National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, 1987), 34.

¹³ Samuel G. Egwu, *Ethnic and Religious Violence in Nigeria* (Jos: St. Stephen INC Bookhouse, 2001), 4.

causes of conflicts. In Nigeria, the diversity and multiplicity of the systems have made religion to be employed for both immediate and remote roles in conflict, depending on the particular clash under investigation. The dynamics between these dual propensities of religion in Nigeria make the exploration of religious conflict both complex and desirable.

A volatile face of religion in Nigeria has to do with its being used as a political instrument. Kalu has argued that as early as the time of Nigerian independence, the effort by Muslims to “maintain a coherent *umma* within a federal structure placed religion at the centre of political life”.¹⁴ Therefore, while some people hinge most of the conflicts in the nation on Nigeria’s long, repressive military dictatorship, there is no doubt that the return of democratic governance in 1999 became an avenue for a more intensive politicization of religion. Ilesanmi described the scenario as “the remapping of the country by the politicians along confessional identities”.¹⁵ Consequently, religious conflicts have ensued with a greater frequency than in the past. According to Alubo, “hardly does any month pass without some form of civil disturbance, since the return to civil rule. It is therefore correct to state that civil disturbances have become a defining characteristic of the return to civil rule.”¹⁶ The theory emerging from this is that the return to civil rule has led to increase in violence in which religion is cardinal. This idea itself is very complicated and has several dimensions to it. And beyond the personal, selfish, and political manoeuvring of religion, Ilesanmi sees the scramble between Islam and Christianity to monopolize all the basic structures of private and public life as religious hegemony.¹⁷ In the same construct, Adogame has connected both CAN and the Nigerian Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs (NSCIA) with partisan politics.¹⁸

¹⁴ Ogbu U. Kalu, “Religion and Conflict Transformation in Africa: Discourses on Nigerian Religious Conflicts, 1980-1998”, 2 (Unpublished paper).

¹⁵ Simeon O. Ilesanmi, *Religious Pluralism and the Nigerian State* (USA: Centre for International Studies, Ohio University, 1997), xxi.

¹⁶ Alubo, 2.

¹⁷ Ilesanmi, xxii.

¹⁸ Afe Adogame, “Politicization of Religion and Religionization of Politics” in *Religion History and Politics in Nigeria*, eds. Chima J. Korieh and G. Ugo Nwokeji (Lanham: University Press of America, 2005), 130-132.

Further, it has been observed that the ushering-in of democracy in Nigeria has brought about the resurgence of the primordial ethnic identity phenomenon which was partially suppressed during military rule. In the early times of colonialism, the political stage of the nation was structured mainly along ethnic divides. The Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo ethnic majorities subjugated the first phase of Nigerian's political drama and the subsequent political endeavours have been rooted in this antecedent. In the pursuit of ethnic politics, religion has been used as visor. Ethnic cravings are sometimes subsumed under religious disguise and ensuing conflicts are narrowed down to the religious sphere. Conversely, religious cravings have also sometimes played the subordinate role to ethnic, socio-economic and political agendas. And at some other times, it is both the ethnic and the religious dimensions to conflicts that emerge inseparably, which some analysts have identified as 'ethno-religious'. According to Egwu, "The conflict spiral generated by the politicization of ethnic and religious identities in contemporary Nigeria has become ferocious and alarming in the last two decades. Beginning from the 1980s, ethnic and religious violence have come to occupy the centre stage".¹⁹

There is no doubt that the country has experienced myriads of intra and inter-religious conflicts especially since 1980. Prominent examples of religious conflicts include the Maitastine riots which began in Kano in 1980 and continued in Bulunkutu (1982), Rigasa (1982), Jimeta (1984), and Gombe (1984). These riots were both intra and inter-religious in nature, which claimed over 5,000 lives.²⁰ Others include the Ilorin Christian/Muslim riots of 1986, the Kafanchan mayhem of 1987, the Bauchi riots of 1991, the Kano (Bonnke) riots of 1991, the Kaduna (Sharia) mayhem of 2000, the September 7, 2001 religious crisis in Jos, the 2001 Kaduna (Miss World Beauty Pageant) disturbances, the 2004 riots in Yelwa-Shendam, the February 2006 massacre of Christians in Maiduguri, and the September 2006 riots in Dutse.

As noted above, religious conflict in Nigeria, more than any other kind of conflict, has become highly inflammable, with great propensity for escalation. An occurrence

¹⁹ Egwu, *Ethnic and Religious Violence*, 2.

²⁰ Ibid., 3.

in one part of the nation spreads easily to other parts through reprisal attacks. Religious conflict is thus not only inclined to undermining the nascent Nigerian democracy; it is capable of precipitating total state collapse. It has led to incalculable loss of lives and immeasurable destruction of property. The consequences have been incessant unrest, distrust, suspicion, broken and sour relationships between Muslims and Christians. Above all, it has jeopardized national cohesion and development.

The local and global processes at work in the religious conflicts in Nigeria should also be noted. While there are many religious conflicts generated through diverse internal dynamics, there are also externally induced or influenced ones. Both Christianity and Islam are recognized global religions and matters of global concerns portend local linkages. This has been the case, but with particular emphasis since the September 11, 2001 bombing of the World Trade Centre and the wars on terror which have preoccupied policy makers and public debate in the world.²¹

Hizkias Assefa has suggested another global dimension to violent conflicts in Africa, which has linkage with the Nigerian religious conflicts. He argues that economic policies like the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), which were imposed on African countries by global bodies like the World Bank and the IMF, have led to greater difficulties for the people. They have brought about a reduction in social spending and this in turn has led to increased unemployment, poorer conditions of the education and health sectors; crime, unrest and agitations. Whatever little economic equity that was in place got destroyed and the cumulative result was the conflict situation in a number of African countries.²² There is no doubt that lack of employment and poverty have been quite integral to the religious conflicts in Nigeria.

Therefore, in view of the comprehensive impact which religious conflicts have made on the entire nation, creative responses aimed at managing, resolving and transforming them have been adopted, but with limited success. Stakeholders like the government (and its agencies), religious bodies, traditional rulers, community

²¹ Abubakar, *Religious Extremism*, 2.

²² Hizikias Assefa, "Peacebuilding in a Globalizing Africa: The Roles of Religious Institutions and Leaders", *Peace Colloquy*, 6, Summer 2004, p. 4 (<http://www.nd.edu>).

leaders, NGOs and several others, have been confronted with the necessity of engaging in intervention and regulation efforts. Scholars have also looked at religious conflicts generally and studied particular conflicts in Nigeria, coming up with recommendations for improved relationships and peaceful coexistence between Christians and Muslims. My study shows that most of such recommendations are not utilized and similar recommendations from 'Commissions of Inquiry' which the government regularly sets up to investigate conflicts, are either only partially implemented or utterly neglected. In the final analysis, resolutions, where they have taken place at all, have not demonstrated that the root causes of conflicts have been adequately taken into consideration. Conflict handling has been either through intervention during conflict (a fire brigade approach) or by some form of post-conflict peace building. While these approaches are not entirely demeaned, they certainly suffer limitations and fall short of preventing re-occurrence of conflicts. In other words, the manner of conflict intervention portends a vicious circle wherein previously ended conflicts are resumed or repeated. This is because most of the current approaches aim only at stopping conflicts, but do not address the underlying root- causes of such conflicts.

The task of conflict transformation goes beyond ending conflict. It seeks to look backward to the roots of conflict and to look forward into what and how things should be, so that there will be less repetition of past violence in order to ensure peaceful coexistence. The basic questions of this research therefore are: How would Nigerians put an end to this (undesired) religious conflicts between Muslims and Christians and build a peaceful society (that is desired)? In what way can the Church contribute to the efforts to transform conflict in Nigeria?

Since two cases of religious conflicts were investigated, additional questions asked in the thesis include: What discourses and theories exist on the issues of conflict in general and on Nigeria in particular? How have scholars studied the roots of religious conflicts in Nigeria, particularly in the North? What are some of the causes of the conflicts in the cases studied? How did these conflicts manifest? What are some of the aftermaths of these conflicts? What conflict-intervention approaches have been employed? What kind of theology can be suggested towards conflict transformation which will address and influence the roots of religious conflict in Nigeria? What

strategies are to be adopted as relevant responses towards the transformation of these religious conflicts? These questions are germane to the understanding of the problem of religious conflict in Nigeria and the task of this research. It is hoped that this study will represent one constructive theological response to the malaise of social instability and the threat of state collapse which religious conflict portends to the Nigerian state.

Purpose and Importance of Study

This study argues that Nigeria as a country is a domain of multiplicity and diversity which threaten its existence through incessant conflicts. Although there are various kinds of multiplicity, the most obvious are in the areas of ethnicity, politics and religion and they all have generated violent conflicts all over the country. Of these three, the most lethal, in my view, is religious conflict, especially as manifested between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria. More than anything else, it has become, in my estimation, the plumb line to test the making or breaking of the nation. As a result, the nation has failed to flourish because where there is insecurity of lives and property, there cannot be meaningful development. In this case therefore, the dysfunctional use of religion is at play, leading to the disintegration of the society. Gwamna thus expressed his lament over the situation: “the continuing religious crisis and the brutality exhibited in the face of the slightest provocation, attest to the fact that religion has become a liability rather than an asset in the Nigerian State.”²³ This deplorable feat of religion in Nigeria has become a major concern of all people. Therefore, this study seeks to present a picture of how religion has been used in a dysfunctional way, as a tool for coercion and conflict; and how it could be used in a functional way, as a tool for accord.

Also, most of the recommended steps for resolving Christian-Muslim conflicts have tactically avoided the ethical issues of religious confessions. The argument of this thesis is that religious conflict, which involves religious people, ought to employ contents of beliefs and religious resources for its transformation. Christians and

²³ Dogara Je’adayibe Gwamna, “Turning the Tides of Religious Intolerance in Nigeria, the External Connections”, A Paper Presented at the Annual Conference of the Historical Society of Nigeria at the University of Jos, 2006.

Muslims are confessors of certain common beliefs which they have treated with disregard in Nigeria and to which their attention must be called, if there is to be stability. This thesis therefore suggests a practical theology of conflict transformation for contemporary Nigerian society which takes into consideration the worldviews of Nigerians and employs certain common teachings of Indigenous Religions, Christianity and Islam. It is hoped that this theological approach will rightly influence Christian praxis in Nigeria and be an example to others. On the importance of such religious approaches, Ilesanmi argues: “It is both unnecessary and undesirable to strip the state of religious values...”²⁴ Also, Assefa contends that religious approaches can even have advantages over secular approaches to conflict transformation because they can more adequately engage mindsets and behaviours which contribute to conflict. He notes:

Transformation of such mindsets is critical for the construction of durable peace. However, since these sentiments are usually hidden or denied, they are very difficult for the peace builder to work on. One advantage religious peace builders have over secular bodies is that they could be allowed by the conflict parties to go into these inner dimensions since working on values, attitudes and motivations is considered to be a legitimate domain of religion. Parties are much more likely to open up, own up and work on those sentiments and mindsets if an initiative comes from religious actors than if it comes from politicians or other secular actors.²⁵

In other words, while Assefa recognizes the role of secular peace builders, he asserts that certain domains are better handled by religious peace builders. Since he contends that what needs to be transformed is the mindset of individuals involved in conflicts, he views the religious peace builders as most equipped to serve as agents of this ‘mind reconstruction’. In the same vein, I view religious peace builders as very necessary for the peace building tasks of Nigeria and it is the purpose of this thesis to articulate theological reflections which can assist in achieving this.

Specifically therefore, the purpose of this study would be enumerated as follows:

- To examine existing theories that seek to explain conflicts
- To study the various approaches to resolving religious conflicts in Nigeria

²⁴ Ilesanmi, xxviii.

²⁵ Assefa, “Peacebuilding”, 7

- To explore the roots of religious conflicts in Nigeria
- To explore the lived experiences of Christians and Muslims involved in religious conflict in Jos and Maiduguri.
- To suggest a practical theological approach for religious conflict transformation in Nigeria

A study of this nature is of invaluable significance and importance for several reasons.

First, this study concerns conflict, a phenomenon that is known and experienced in every part of the world. Although there are times when conflicts have been profitable, for most times, conflicts are chaotic, destructive and regressive in nature. Therefore, everyone in the society is a stake holder in conflict issues. Parents, teachers, managers, politicians, doctors, lawyers, traditional rulers, community leaders, religious leaders, civil servants, the private sector, security agencies, young people, women, men, NGOs, governments, students etc., become inevitable partners in the search for peace. Through the years, scholars have conducted several researches in their bid to provide solutions to the numerous conflicts in Nigeria and this study is another contribution to that on-going search.

Second, conflict is multidisciplinary and just as several hands have been on deck to contribute to its transformation, the theological discipline also needs to join the race for the promotion of peace and stability in Nigeria. It is therefore argued in this thesis that a theological model for religious conflict transformation can complement other efforts already in use. It has been noted that religious conflict, as manifested between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria, has become one of the most potent threats to the stability and development of the nation and if nothing urgent is done to alter this trend, the making of the nation will remain elusive. In this connection, Alex Gboyega recalls succinctly, the speech of T.Y Danjuma, one-time member of the top echelon of Nigerian junta, who observed the predicament thus: “I cannot think of any time in this country’s history that people were so divided against each other as now. The

most obvious is the religious division and it is the most potent”.²⁶ This thesis is therefore concerned about how to work out harmonious relationships between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria through an approach which combines the socio-scientific methodology and theological reflections. This differs from extant scholarly works that are characterized by the avoidance of an ethical and practical theological ethos. While these scholars have attempted to maintain neutrality in their approach to religious conflicts,²⁷ the argument of this thesis is that a practical theological approach may engage the issue of religious conflict through novel ways which offer great hopes for a more reconciled living between Christians and Muslims in contemporary Nigerian society. Theological efforts have been geared towards solving problems in the lives of people and because of the volatile nature of religious conflict in contemporary Nigeria, it becomes absolutely important to reflect theologically on how to promote peace, unity and progress.

Conceptual Framework

This section deals with the conceptual issues raised in this study. It seeks to clarify the meanings of concepts used in order to avoid ambiguity and to regulate the sense in which key terms are deployed. This is significant for grasping the main argument of the study.

On Theology

Predictably, there is no universal definition of ‘theology’. Rather, the word has been defined in many ways by many people, “each one stressing the aspect that fits his scheme”²⁸. Theology has been described in the classical construct of Saint Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109) as “faith seeking understanding (*fides quarens*

²⁶ Alex Gboyega, “Nigeria: Conflict Unresolved” in *Governance as Conflict Management: Politics and Violence in West Africa* ed., William Zartman (Washington D.C: Brookings Institution Press, 1997), 195.

²⁷ Ilesanmi argues that scholars of religion and politics have always avoided the normative questions of religion by seeking neutrality. He calls for moral reflection as “the corrective lens” on the issues of social environment. xxviii.

²⁸ Osadolor Imasogie, *Guidelines for Christian Theology in Africa* (Achimota: African Christian Press, 1983), 20.

intellectum).”²⁹ However, several other definitions of theology have emerged. Ambler defines theology etymologically as “the study of God”³⁰; but admits that this has never meant that the inquiry revolves around God alone. For him, in theology, we “seek to understand God as the source and basis and ultimate context of our own human existence, and therefore, as refracted in human experience and history.”³¹ That means theology is a reflection on the issues of life, not in themselves, but in relation to the ultimate source of being.

Grenz and Olson suggest that theology is the attempt to understand and apply God’s word,³² and Paul Tillich says: “theology is the statement of the truth of the Christian message and interpretation of this truth for every generation”.³³ This brief understanding of theology is quite important as a background to the theological reflections in this thesis. Theology here therefore will mean an attempt to understand the truth of God in relation to the issues of life.

In the West, theology has gone through a series of constructs which include patristic, reformation, modern and post-modern theologies.³⁴ Traditionally, scholars have distinguished four departments of theology as Exegetical Theology, Historical Theology, Systematic Theology and Practical Theology.³⁵ For the purpose of this study, we shall be utilizing the approach of practical theology which is said to have been given its formative years and understanding by Frederick Schleiermacher. He saw the discipline as the “application of theology to the practice of the Church.”³⁶ However, in view of the interreligious and contextual features of this research,

²⁹ Wijssen, 41.

³⁰ Rex Ambler, *Global Theology: The Meaning of Faith in the Present World Crises* (London: CMS Press, 1990), 9.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Stanley J. Grenz and Roger E. Olson, *Who Needs Theology? An Invitation to the Study of God* (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1996), 24-25.

³³ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* (3 vol. in one) (Maryknoll: Harper and Row, 1967), 3.

³⁴ Kevin J. Vanhoozer, “Systematic Theology”, *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible* ed. Kevin J. Vanhoozer (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 774-775. See also Alister McGrath, “A Very Brief History of Christian Belief”, *The New Lion Handbook: Christian Belief* (Oxford: Lion Hudson plc, 2006), 12.

³⁵ Geerhardus Vos, *Biblical Theology: Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1948), 4.

³⁶ David Lyall, *Integrity of Pastoral Care* (London: The Cromwell Press, 2001), 24.

elements of contextual theology, in the form of African theology, and comparative theology have also been engaged. The delineation of these theological strands will be found in chapter two where the methodologies are discussed.

From the onset, it is important to note some issues raised by Graham et al on theological reflections. According to them, theology must be emancipated from various academic bondages into which it has been trapped, which includes limiting it to the things of the past and stationing it at the custody of some ‘elderly and authoritative men’ who are laden with incomprehensibility. Rather, “the first thing to be proposed is that theology should be seen primarily as a contemporary enquiry.” Also, “most theology books, however obscure, arise from someone wanting to gain real understanding of a question which seems to them of contemporary relevance [and] what unites all theology is its quest for adequate and true responses to the realities of human and religious experiences.”³⁷ Doing theology therefore involves reflection on present situations in the light of faith.

On Religion

Another important concept that deserves explanation in this thesis is ‘religion.’ Scholars are inconclusive on its definition, owing to the wild range of its use. According to Basedau and Juan, “Religion is most probably a category too broad for meaningful analysis”³⁸ and Thiselton gives three reasons why neither a simple nor a single definition of religion is possible. First, he argues that there is an increased understanding of multiplicity and diversity which does not tolerate over-generalization. For instance, common traits are expected to go beyond Abrahamic religions. Second, there is limitation in an inquirer’s horizon of the religion of the ‘other’. Third, religion is subjected to sociological or ideological criticism in post-modern thought, rather than theological or philosophical approaches, because it is viewed to serve “vested interests of social power”.³⁹ These factors therefore

³⁷ Elaine Graham, Heather Walton and Frances Ward, *Theological Reflections: Sources* (London: SCM Press, 2007), 278.

³⁸ Matthias Basedau and Alexander De Juan, “The ‘Ambivalence of the Sacred’ in Africa: The Impact of Religion on Peace and Conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa”, GIGA Research Programme, March, 2007, 7.

³⁹ Anthony C. Thiselton, “Religion”, *A Concise Encyclopedia of the Philosophy of Religion*, Oxford, Oneworld Publications, 2002.

contribute to the serious challenges coming from any attempt to give a concise definition or explanation.

Anthony Blasi adds other dimensions to the difficulty of defining religion. These include the rise of novel religions, the revival of movements and the emergence of quasi-religious patterns in modern society. It follows that in modern society, one may not recognize that certain conducts are religious. The problem of a definition of religion therefore revolves around “whether or not sharp lines should be set...or ambiguous boundaries preserved.”⁴⁰

John Stek, while accepting the difficulty in formulating a definition, says:

Most commonly, however [Religion] refers to ways in which humans relate to the divine (a presence [or plurality of such] or force [sometimes construed as plural] behind, beyond or pervading sensible reality). All such ‘ways’ include a system of beliefs about the divine and how it is related to the world.....and related practices that play analogous role in people’s lives...most often involves an attitude of awe toward the divine, and a pattern of actions (rituals and ethical code).⁴¹

Therefore religion is to be viewed as a vast variety of responses to what people consider as ‘the divine’, which may be perceived as singular or plural. It involves ‘a system of beliefs’, ‘rituals and ethical codes’; and “a pattern of actions”. Also, J.M Yinger defines religion as “a system of beliefs and practices by means of which a group of people struggle with the ultimate problem of human life”.⁴² We note here that religion often involves ‘beliefs and practices’ and the idea of ‘a group of people’. It possesses both doctrinal and institutional features. Therefore, from the foregoing, it is clear that religion involves the issues of plurality⁴³, transcendence, and identity. It is also personal and collective, individual and social. Thus, the expression “religious conflict” in this thesis refers to religion as means of creating social identity. In this way one can understand how it easily gets entangled with other identity markers such as ethnicity and politics.

⁴⁰ Anthony J. Blasi, “Definition of Religion”, *Encyclopedia of Religion and Society*, London, Atta Mira Press, 1998, 129.

⁴¹ John H. Stek, “Religion”, *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology* Ed Walter A. Elwell, Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1996, 665-666.

⁴² J.M. Yinger, *Religion, Society and Individual*, New York, Macmillan, 1957, 9.

⁴³ See Richard Mouw and Sander Griffione, *Pluralisms and Horizons: An Essay in Christian Public Philosophy* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 13-15.

What is Conflict?

Kenneth Boulding says “Conflict is an activity that is found everywhere”⁴⁴ and numerous academic theories have been formulated to show that it is an inevitable product of human relations.⁴⁵ Conflict may be personal, between individuals, or public, between societies. Individual conflict may turn into societal conflict and societal conflict can turn into individual conflict. This shows that the phenomenon itself is problematic, needing strategic and careful handling.⁴⁶

It is important to note from this point that while conflict is commonly assumed to be bad and much of it basically destructive, there are times when conflict may become a means of good and growth.⁴⁷ William Blake has argued that a conflict “is not bad or ‘destructive’ per se. It can be an explicit way to resolve tensions between parties, prevent stagnation, stimulate interest and curiosity; it can be the medium ‘through which problems can be aired and solutions arrived at.’”⁴⁸ Also Lewis Coser has observed that conflict can have positive political and social functions⁴⁹ and Tidwell says: “A person or society without conflict is dead”⁵⁰ However, how it is managed will determine whether the conflict will become functional or dysfunctional.⁵¹ Also, Joyce Huggett says:

There is no cure for conflict on this side of eternity. It is going to happen...But then, as we have begun to discover, conflict is not a disease requiring cure. On the contrary, conflict is to relationships what striving and struggling is to sticky horse-chestnut buds in spring; a burst of energy that, correctly channelled, results in prolific growth, the shedding of husks and eventual shelter for others.⁵²

⁴⁴ Kenneth E Boulding, *Conflict and Defence* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1962), 1.

⁴⁵ Ann Pitsch, Overview of Conflict Management Methods, http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/afrtel/research/papers/overview_of_conflict.pdf, p.1.

⁴⁶ HPP (Hennie) Lotter, *Injustice, Violence and Peace: The Case of South Africa* (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi B.V, 1997), 7.

⁴⁷ Richard Rice-Oxley, “Bridgebuilders: Peacemaking through Mediation in England and Northern Ireland,” in *Grove Ethical Studies* (Cambridge: Grove Books Limited, 1998), 3.

⁴⁸ http://www.mkgandhi.org/conflict_reso/chap01.htm, 1.

⁴⁹ Lewis A. Coser, *The Function of Social Conflict* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1956), 154-155.

⁵⁰ Alan Tidwell, *Conflict Resolved? A Critical Assessment of Conflict Resolution* (London: Continuum, 1998), vii.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Joyce Huggett, *Conflict – Friend or Foe?* (Eastbourne: Kingsway, 1985), 24.

Therefore, proper conflict intervention is of crucial essence as it can produce very positive results. When it is constructively managed, there can be value in conflict.

The term “conflict” is quite sophisticated; used to explain opposing and incongruous actions, small and big. Conflict ranges from a simple non-verbal grudge or disagreement between parties to outright violence and war. Though such a range is wide, all conflicts share certain similarities.⁵³ Conflict was defined by Coser as “a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power, and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure, or eliminate their rivals”.⁵⁴ The key words in this definition include ‘struggle’, ‘opponent’ and ‘rivals’ which are features of most conflicts; especially, the Muslim/Christian conflicts of Nigeria. Miall *et al* defined conflict as “the pursuit of incompatible goals by different groups”.⁵⁵ In this case a group may even be an individual since an individual may constitute a conflict ‘party’. Boulding’s definition is similar. For him conflict may be defined “as a situation of competition in which the parties are aware of the incompatibility of potential future positions and in which each party wishes to occupy a position that is incompatible with the wishes of the other”.⁵⁶ In other words, conflict implies a situation in which both actors or group of actors are aware of the incompatibility⁵⁷ involved. A conflict therefore emerges when a person or a group of persons seek to occupy a given space to the exclusion of the other, who is equally seeking to occupy the same space.

Religious Conflict

Because there are varying types of conflicts, from interpersonal to international, scholars have qualified conflicts for the purpose of specificity. To justify the need to narrow down on the vast range of conflict, Alan Tidwel asked the question: “Is an

⁵³ Tidwel, 31.

⁵⁴ Walter W. Powell and Richard Robbins eds., *Conflict and Consensus: A Festschrift in Honour of Lewis Coser* (New York: The Free Press, 1984) p. 8. See Hugh Miall, Oliver Ramsbotham, and Tom Woodhouse, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999), 20-21. They discuss Armed Conflict, Violent Conflict and Deadly Conflict.

⁵⁵ Miall et al, 19.

⁵⁶ Boulding, *Conflict and Defence*, 5.

⁵⁷ Things are said to be ‘incompatible’ when disagreement and the inability to exist harmoniously together are implicit.

ongoing verbal conflict within a workplace somehow comparable to military combat?”⁵⁸ Therefore, in view of the varying degrees of conflicts, most writers have streamlined their examination of conflicts into types. But even though conflicts are perceived as different types, they often can be a mixture of several types. That is why a single conflict can be very complex.

Religious conflict is itself a very vast type of conflict. Located within religious conflict are intra-religious and inter-religious conflicts. Intra-religious conflicts themselves are varied as some may be between different traditions of the same religious group or even as expressed within specific religious practices. In this thesis, religious conflict will refer to inter-religious conflicts in which acts of violence have been perpetrated against adherents of ‘other’ religions on the platform of religion as a social identity marker. In the context of this thesis, it refers mainly to the violent clashes between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria. McTernan has emphasized the ubiquity of such religious conflicts:

From Indonesia to Northern Ireland, the Middle East to Kashmir, India to Nigeria, the Balkans to Sri Lanka, Christians, Buddhists, Jews, Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs justify the use of violence on the grounds that they are protecting their religious identity and interest.⁵⁹

That implies that adherents of religion all over the world have justified atrocities on the grounds of their religious interests and identity.

Understanding Conflict Transformation

Conflict transformation has been described by some analysts as a step beyond ‘conflict resolution’. It is therefore important to understand the concept of conflict resolution in order to understand conflict transformation. Conflict resolution itself will receive illumination by the understanding of another related term, namely, ‘conflict management’. It is in the understanding of these two concepts that a proper understanding of conflict transformation can be achieved. Yet it is worth noting from the onset that a lot of literature in the field has blurred distinctions of the concepts,

⁵⁸ Tidwel, 30.

⁵⁹ Oliver McTernan, *Violence in God’s Name* (London: Longman and Todd Ltd, 2003), ix. See also Michael Nazir-Ali’s *Conviction and Conflict: Islam, Christianity and World Order* (London: Continuum, 2006) in which he argued that religious conflict is not limited to Christians and Muslims alone.

goals and methods of these conflict intervention strategies. In some cases, there are overlaps in their functions. Hugh Miall observes:

It is helpful to distinguish three separate schools within this overall field [of conflict intervention] ...while at the same time recognizing the significant areas of overlap between them. All three not only articulate varying approaches to conflict intervention, but also reflect different conceptualisations of conflict.⁶⁰

Therefore, similarities and differences in these concepts must be noted. Ramsbotham et al affirmed their similarities as follows:

In our view it does not matter in the end what label is used as the umbrella term (candidates have included 'conflict regulation' and 'conflict management' as well as conflict resolution and conflict transformation), so long as the field is coherent enough to contain the substance of what is being advocated in each case...and that conflict resolvers and conflict transformers are essentially engaged in the same enterprise.⁶¹

Yet, there are differences between the concepts, methods and goals of conflict management, conflict resolution and conflict transformation. And although the three concepts have drawn their theories largely from the same sources, they are not synonymous with each other⁶² as shown below.

Conflict Management

The term 'conflict management' has been employed to describe various forms of conflict interventions. It "has been used as a generic term to cover the whole gamut of positive conflict handling" and, in narrower ways, as a "way to the settlement and containment of violent conflict".⁶³ When the term means the general positive handling of conflict, many things are involved. In this category, all approaches for managing conflict will be included. The assumption of theorists in conflict management is that conflict arises from existing institutions, historical relationships and established distribution of power. And when it arises, 'resolving' it is viewed as unrealistic. Therefore, the best approach to conflict is to manage and contain it with

⁶⁰ Hugh Miall, "Conflict Transformation: A Multi-Dimensional Task", <http://www.berghof-handbook.net>, 3.

⁶¹ Oliver Ramsbotham, Tom Woodhouse and Hugh Miall, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution: The Prevention, Management and Transformation of Deadly Conflicts*, Second Ed. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006), 9

⁶² Miall, "Conflict Transformation", 3.

⁶³ Ramsbotham et al, 29.

the anticipation of reaching a compromise which might lead to laying aside violence and resuming normal politics.⁶⁴ According to Miall:

Conflict management is the art of appropriate intervention to achieve political settlements, particularly by those powerful actors having the power and resources to bring pressure on the conflicting parties in order to induce them to settle. It is also the art of designing appropriate institutions to guide the inevitable conflict into appropriate channels.⁶⁵

Importantly, we note from his definition that the goal of conflict management is ‘settlement’ and the means are ‘institutions’. Bloomfield and Reilly also argue that ‘managing’ conflict, rather than ‘removing’ conflict (as in resolution), is the more realistic way in conflict intervention. Management is a constructive way “to bring opposing sides together in a cooperative process, how to design a practical, achievable, cooperative system for the constructive management of difference.”⁶⁶

Vitaly, conflict management’s methodologies include the engagement of the services of appropriate powerful and resourceful ‘institutions’ to bring pressure on conflicting parties. Genicot and Skaperdas have listed the ‘institutions’ of conflict management to include constitutions, laws, diplomatic procedures, domestic organizations and international organizations. Through these institutions, conflict parties are offered the privilege of addressing their disputes differently from resorting to the use of arms. Therefore, increasing the probability of peace depends on a greater level of investment to develop these institutions of conflict management.⁶⁷ They exist within countries and across sovereign states. Within countries, these institutions include the constitutions, courts (for adjudication), administrative procedures and other relevant bodies. Across sovereign states they include organizations like the World Court, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the United Nations (UN), just to mention a few. It is argued that the European

⁶⁴ Miall, 3.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ D. Bloomfield and Ben Reilly, “The Changing Nature of Conflict and Conflict Management”, in Peter Harris and Ben Reilly eds. *Democracy and Deep-Rooted Conflict*, Stockholm: Institute for Democracy 1998) p.18. and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), op. cit.

⁶⁷ Garance Genicot and Stergios Skaperdas, “Investing in Conflict Management”, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol 46, 1, February, 2002. p.155. See also Michael Brecher and Patrick James, “Patterns of Crisis Management”, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (Sep., 1988), 426-456

Community (EC)⁶⁸ came together, not only for economic reasons, but also to mitigate the likelihood of a repetition of the two world wars.⁶⁹

Maluwa has argued that in conflict management, arbitration and judicial settlements are classified as settlement by legal means while settlement involving the other institutions mentioned above can be classified as settlement by political means.⁷⁰ Markus Kornprobst gives an example of international conflict management through diplomatic discourse in the event of the border dispute in 1985 between Mali and Burkina Faso. Settlement was by the International Court of Justice in 1986.⁷¹ Also, in the numerous post-Cold War conflicts which occurred in Africa, the UN, in collaboration with the OAU and sub-regional organizations such as the ECOWAS,⁷² was significantly involved in several peace-making and peace keeping efforts.⁷³ At certain points the UN partnered with NGOs in the management of African conflicts.⁷⁴ All such processes of interventions, both nationally and internationally, belong to the category of conflict management, although there are many other forms in practice. Essentially, conflict management methods will involve diplomacy, adjudication, arbitration, peace-keeping and peacemaking through the involvement of 'institutions' in national and international conflicts in order to reach settlement.

Although conflict management has several merits, it has been criticized for sometimes attempting to keep things 'nice' when issues should be blown open in order for them to be addressed.⁷⁵ Conflict management has also been accused of

⁶⁸ There are the 15 European nations in the EC.

⁶⁹ Genicot and Skaperdas, 157.

⁷⁰ Tiyanjan Maluwa, "The Peaceful Settlement of Disputes among African States, 1963-1983: Some Conceptual Issues and Practical Trends", *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly*, Vol. 38, No 2, (April, 1989), 301.

⁷¹ Markus Kornprobst, "The Management of Border Disputes in African Regional Sub-Systems: Comparing West Africa and the Horn of Africa", *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (Sep., 2002), 379-380.

⁷² ECOWAS is the regional organisation consisting of sixteen member states of coastal and hinterland West African established in 1975. ECOMOG is "ECOWAS Monitoring Group."

⁷³ Marrack Goulding, "The United Nations and Conflict in Africa since the Cold War", *African Affairs*, Vol. 98, No. 391 (Apr., 1999), 155-156.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 157.

⁷⁵ Carolyn Schrock-Shenk, "Introducing Conflict and Conflict Transformation" in *Making Peace with Conflict* eds. Carolyn Schrock-Shenk and Lawrence Ressler (Waterloo: Herald Press, 1999), 35.

being usually disadvantageous to one of the parties of conflict as it often favours one group against another in order to reach settlement. This perpetuates inequality in power relations and agreements reached become superficial.⁷⁶ Also, while conflict management helps to reduce the dangers of crisis and lessens potential or actual suffering; it does not engage the roots of conflict; hence it offers the propensity for conflict regeneration.⁷⁷

Conflict Resolution

Conflict resolution is our second term in our attempt to understand conflict transformation and defining conflict resolution has been done in a variety of ways. According to Wallensteen, conflict resolution occurs “where the conflicting parties enter into an agreement that solves their central incompatibilities, accept each other’s continued existence as parties and cease all violent actions against each other.”⁷⁸ The key elements here include: entering into “agreement that solves incompatibilities,” accepting ‘each other’s continued existence as parties’ and “cessation of all violent actions against each other.”

Hugh Miall states that conflict resolution seeks “to explore what the roots of the conflict really are and to identify creative solutions that the parties may have missed in their commitment to entrenched positions”.⁷⁹ He further states that the aim of conflict resolution is for a process to be developed which will effectively *resolve* disputes.⁸⁰ Isaac Albert adds to this stream of argument by saying that conflict resolution aims to “putting an end to the entire problem. It is aimed at ‘stamping out’ the conflict.”⁸¹ Similarly, Schrock-Shenk contends that the term ‘conflict resolution’

⁷⁶ Oyesola, 156-167.

⁷⁷ Peter Wallensteen, *Understanding Conflict Resolution* Second ed. (London: Sage Publications Inc., 2007), 5.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 8.

⁷⁹ Miall, 3.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 4.

⁸¹ Isaac Olawale Albert, “Concepts and Methods in Peace and Conflict Studies”, in Celestine Bassey and Oshita Oshita eds. *Conflict Resolution, Identity Crisis and Development in Africa* (Lagos: Malthouse Press Limited, 2007), 13.

was the coinage of experts who sought “to finish conflict, wrap it up and put it behind”.⁸² This idea suggests that the goal of resolution is to eliminate conflict.

The main method of conflict resolution is to rely on intervention “by skilled but powerless third-parties working unofficially with parties to foster new thinking and new relationships”.⁸³ These third parties help to explore, analyse and reframe the stands of disputants so that they can move from “zero-sum destructive patterns of conflict to positive-sum constructive outcomes.”⁸⁴ Alan Tidwell has presented four main methods of conflict resolution to include mediation, negotiation, arbitration and adjudication.⁸⁵

Mediation has been described by Ramsbotham *et al*⁸⁶ and Tidwell⁸⁷ as the process of intervening in conflict by a neutral third party who assists disputants to consider various options and to finally arrive at a consensual settlement. Though this method involves a neutral person(s), the process is voluntary and the control over the outcome still resides in the conflicting parties. Negotiation is another method in conflict resolution, but which does not involve a third party. Disputants resolve their problems between themselves.⁸⁸ Although this approach is considered the ideal in conflict, negotiation is viewed as difficult when conflict has escalated. Another method of conflict resolution is arbitration. In this approach, an authority figure intervenes in conflict and by his pronouncement, the parties of conflict accept terms of resolution.⁸⁹ The fourth model is adjudication, a very familiar institutional approach where the law courts resolve disputes. It is argued that resolving conflicts through legal means has resulted in the exacerbation of conflict because courts do not delve into the matters of relationships.⁹⁰ Importantly, while third parties are responsible for the processes of mediation, arbitration and adjudication, in ‘negotiation’, the parties of conflict are in charge of the process of reconciliation

⁸² Schrock-Shenk, “Introducing Conflict”, 35.

⁸³ Miall, 3.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Tidwell, 21.

⁸⁶ Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall, 29

⁸⁷ Tidwell, 21.

⁸⁸ Ibid. , 20. See also Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall, 29.

⁸⁹ Tidwell, 22.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 23.

themselves. Furthermore, both ‘arbitration’ and ‘adjudication’ are methods also used in conflict management, hence the predicted overlap.

There may be other kinds of overlaps between conflict management and resolution. For instance, ‘peacekeeping’, a conventional method of conflict management, has equally functioned as a tool of conflict resolution. In a post Cold-War study of peacekeeping, investigation revealed that peacekeepers are sometimes deeply involved in mediating a variety of local, interpersonal, and inter-group conflicts, due to their close contact with civilian populations. They therefore become actively concerned about the issues that give rise to disputes, not merely ensuring cease fire and disarming belligerents.⁹¹

From the foregoing, the goal of conflict resolution is finding a solution to, or ‘ending’ or ‘eliminating’ conflict. This has been criticized in various ways as being usually unrealizable. Schrock-Shenk argues:

The problem with this view is that it is rarely possible nor desirable to completely close up a conflict even when we resolve specified pieces of it. Furthermore, we do not want to eliminate conflict. It is precisely in the struggle of the conflict, in the memories of the struggle, and in ongoing relationship tensions that we learn and grow.⁹²

In other words there are benefits from conflict and eliminating it is impossible. Albert also says:

The assumption here is that when you say you have resolved the conflict, it is like saying you have solved a mathematical problem and have at the end of the answer a ‘QED’ [meaning ‘proved beyond reasonable doubt’]. There is no ‘QED’ to any terms of peace agreement. There is bound to be a few issues that had not been attended to or are hidden, which could rear their ugly heads later.⁹³

In the same vein, Lederach explains ‘resolution’ as implying “finding solution to a problem” and bringing some set of painful or undesired events to an end.⁹⁴ He views this as overambitious and deficient for peace building because it focuses on the

⁹¹ James A. Wall Jr. and Daniel Druckman, “Mediation in Peace Keeping Missions”, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 47, No. 5 (Oct., 2003), 693-4.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Albert, 14.

⁹⁴ Lederach, *Little Book*, 29.

‘presenting problems’ of conflict without confronting underlying issues that require structural change.⁹⁵

But there are other problems associated with the idea of conflict resolution. One, because interveners (mostly third parties) are usually powerless over disputing parties, agreements are not kept. Two, conflict resolution is considered ambiguous because it describes both a process and the actualization of that process. Three, the term conflict resolution is used to describe both professional and non-professional activities.⁹⁶ But Ramsbotham *et al* have also given three reasons why the term ‘conflict resolution’ has been more favoured in explaining conflict intervention than ‘conflict management and ‘conflict transformation’. One, ‘resolution’ is the oldest term known for describing the field of the study of conflict handling. Two, most literatures use the term ‘resolution’ even when they mean more or less than ‘resolving’ matters. Three; the media project the term ‘resolution’ on matters of conflict intervention more than the other concepts and therefore the term is more generic.⁹⁷

Conflict Transformation

Conflict Transformation, in my view, is a new approach to conflict which attempts to describe what ought to happen in conflict more precisely. Ramsbotham et al put it succinctly:

Conflict transformation is a term which for some analysts is a significant step beyond conflict resolution, but which, in our view represents its deepest level...It implies a deep transformation in the institutions and discourses that produced violence, as well as in the conflict parties themselves and their relationships. It corresponds to the underlying tasks of structural and cultural peace-building.⁹⁸

This involves a more *structural* level of interaction than resolving conflict. Schrock-Shenk argues for the differences between transformation and the two complementary terms:

⁹⁵ ‘Presenting problem’ is Lederach’s term of describing the immediate manifestation of conflict.

⁹⁶ Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall, 29.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 9.

⁹⁸ Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall, 29.

Resolution focuses mostly on the ‘problem’ dimension of conflict, finding solution to the actual issues. Management focuses on the ‘process’ dimension, finding ways to work through conflict. Though we seek change in all three dimensions of conflict, the notion of transformation begins with and focuses more heavily on the people involved and their deeper patterns of relationships with each other.⁹⁹

Therefore conflict transformation is concerned with the *deeper* matters of building peace and changing the relationships which brought about the violence in the first place. Albert recalls Reychler’s definition of conflict transformation as: “fixing the problems, which threaten the core interest of the parties; changing the strategic thinking; and changing the opportunity structure and the ways of interaction.”¹⁰⁰ He also says:

The difference between conflict resolution and transformation is quite slight but fundamental. Whereas resolution is aimed at containing the problem immediately and thus checking it, transformation assumes that a ‘resolved’ conflict could still escalate; what it does therefore is to reach the ‘tap root’ of the conflict and deactivate it.¹⁰¹

Similarly, Assefa has contended that it was the lack of the transformation approach that stalled the peace building efforts of the various post-independence conflicts of African nations. While he commended the efforts made during and after periods of warfare, he argued that these efforts suffered serious limitations as they were “primarily aimed at stopping the armed conflicts rather than at also addressing the underlying root causes so that the conflicts do not erupt again”.¹⁰² He gave examples of Liberia, Somalia, Sudan and Sierra-Leone as places which enjoyed the respite that came from the temporary *end* to their wars, but failed to understand that unless the root causes were addressed, cruel past could be repeated.¹⁰³ The situation is similar with the conflicts in Nigeria where government security agencies often ruthlessly contain or suppress conflicts. “In the process, the root of the problem remained unaddressed, risking a capricious resurgence in a later date.”¹⁰⁴ Addressing such aspects in order to create new realities would be the pathway to peace building. That

⁹⁹ Schrock-Shenk, 35.

¹⁰⁰ Albert, 14.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Assefa, *Peacebuilding*, 3.

¹⁰³ Ibid, 4.

¹⁰⁴ Celestine O. Bassey, “Epidemiology of Conflict and Violence in Nigeria” in eds. Celestine Bassey and Oshita Oshita *Conflict Resolution*, 148-149.

is the whole idea of conflict transformation. It is not opposed to management and resolution, but goes beyond them to ensure change in relationships and structures.

John Paul Lederach's Conflict Transformation Approach

Conflict transformation in this thesis is based on John Paul Lederach's conceptual framework. Miall credited him for developing what he considered "the most comprehensive statements to date of conflict transformation thinking for practitioners"¹⁰⁵ in his book, *Building Peace, Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. Also in *The Little Book on Conflict Transformation*,¹⁰⁶ Lederach traces his adoption of the expression, 'conflict transformation' to the 1980s, in replacement of the widely known 'conflict resolution'. His conflict transformation approach 'recognizes that conflict is a normal and continuous dynamic within human relationships...seeks to understand the particular episode of conflict not in isolation, but as embedded in the greater pattern.' Conflict transformation understands change 'at the level of immediate presenting issues and that of broader patterns and issues.' To illustrate this, Lederach employed what he called the 'lenses of transformation'. Using his progressive lenses as model, he explained how on one eyeglasses frame, he had three lens segments. One could bring things of great distance into focus; the second brought mid-range objects into clarity and the third was for reading.¹⁰⁷ Though these three lens segments were held together on one frame, they performed different functions. This lens analogy suggests several implications for conflict transformation. First, when there is a conflict, the immediate situation must be seen. This is called the 'presenting issue (problem)' or the 'episode' or the 'peaks' in a mountain range. Second, a conflict must make one see 'deeper patterns' of relationship. These are the contexts or roots of conflict; also known as the 'epicentre' or the 'valleys' of a mountain range. Third, there is the need for a way of seeing both

¹⁰⁵ Miall, 7.

¹⁰⁶ John Paul Lederach is a Professor of International Peace building who has used his approach in over 25 countries of the world. Of note are his conflict transformation works in East and West Africa, the region of the current investigation. See *The Little Book on Conflict Transformation* (Intercourse: Good Books, 2003). The book was studied for the conceptual framework of this thesis. See also *Building Peace, Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington: United States Institute for Peace Press, 1997).

¹⁰⁷ Lederach, *The Little Book*, 7-13.

the ‘presenting issues’ and the ‘underlying roots’ as a platform to envision ‘the preferred future’ for the desired change. This is what is needed in transformation.¹⁰⁸

Transformation ‘seeks to create a framework to transform the *content*, *context* and the *structure* of ...relationship’.¹⁰⁹ In other words, the present conflict situation gives one the opportunity to look into the past underlying situations and to seek structures which will bring a change to the two situations for the benefit of the present and the future. Lederach says the ‘presenting issues’ serve as the ‘window’ through which ‘deeper patterns’ are seen. In this sense, transformation looks not only at ‘immediate’ problems which might require short-term resolution, but much beyond. It looks at the underlying contexts which necessarily require long-term structural change for the envisioned future.¹¹⁰

To buttress the foregoing, Lederach gave another illustration which he called the map of conflict. There are three spheres in the map. The first is the sphere of immediate issues (the presenting problems). The bigger sphere which swallows the first sphere is the sphere of patterns of relationship (the context/roots of the problems). This shows that the immediate issues are within a context. How things have been provide the background to how things are. A third sphere which is the biggest represents the design for change which is needed by both the presenting and the underlying issues. In order to do this, there must be the willingness to create new ways of relationships and structures that look toward the future. He summed this up by saying: “In the broadest terms, then, the transformation framework comprises three inquiries: the presenting situation, the horizon of preferred future, and the development of change process linking the two.”¹¹¹

Also, Lederach conceived transformation as ‘ebbing’ and ‘flowing’. The main question in transformation is, “How do we end [ebb] something not desired and build [flow] something desired?”¹¹² That means transformation seeks both solution and

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, 34-39.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 12.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 13.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 38.

¹¹² Ibid., 41.

social change, ending something and beginning another. To seek solutions alone has been the preoccupation of conflict resolution. But to look beyond the need of short-term solutions into the roots of conflict, with the determination to put in a process for social change, is transformation. This usually involves long-term actions. Therefore, the process of transformation of a conflict will require time-periods as short-term, mid-term or long-term.¹¹³

As for the method of conflict transformation, Lederach has suggested an integrative, comprehensive and analytical framework which he also calls “Approaches to Peacebuilding”.¹¹⁴ In this construct, ‘transformation’, otherwise known as ‘Peacebuilding,’ calls for long-term commitment to establishing infrastructure across the levels of a society. He sees the best infrastructure that empowers reconciliation as coming from within societies affected by conflict, although he also advocates for the maximization of contribution from outside.¹¹⁵ To achieve this comprehensive approach to Peacebuilding, a population affected by conflict must first be analysed into three leadership levels. Lederach sees leadership as a pyramid with three levels, namely, top-level, middle-level and grassroots-level.¹¹⁶

The apex of the pyramid or top-level leadership represents the fewest people, very visible and influential in the society. They are usually the highest representative leaders of the government and opposition movements in conflicts. They may include military, political and religious leaders who are the main voices for their constituencies in both conflict generation and resolution. In peace building, these persons focus on high level negotiations and serve as mediators, sometimes single-handedly. They are experts in procuring cease-fire and providing immediate remedy for conflict situations.¹¹⁷ The middle of the pyramid represents the Middle-Range leadership of the society with more people than the top level, but certainly less than there are in the base of the pyramid. They usually include highly respected individuals such as educationists, religious leaders, and people of prestige in the

¹¹³ Lederach, *Building Peace*, 77

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 44.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, xvi.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 39.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 38-39.

society. They are generally connected to both the top and the grassroots levels. In Peacebuilding they are involved in Problem Solving workshops, peace commissions and training in conflict resolution.¹¹⁸ The base of the pyramid encompasses the largest number of people from the grassroots of the population. The leaders here include basically people involved in local communities on face-to-face and day-to-day levels. During conflicts, they assist in administering relief materials and health programmes.¹¹⁹

Each of these three levels of actors is expected to be concerned with peace building functions at its level and across the levels from the top to the bottom (horizontally and vertically). Lederach emphasizes the uniqueness and interdependence of the various levels in the activities of peace building, hence it is tagged an integrative comprehensive approach. However, he mentions the special significance of the mid-level leadership which integrates both the top and grassroots levels of leadership in peace building. Because the mid-level leaders have links to parties across the conflict, they are said to have the greatest potential for taking immediate actions and serving in long-term transformation programmes. To this category belong religious leaders.¹²⁰

It is with the above understanding that the task of this thesis was carried out. In brief, the ‘presenting issues’ of this research are the religious conflicts of Jos and Maiduguri. They are the ‘window’ through which the roots of the religious conflicts in Nigeria were observed. Looking at both the presenting issues and the roots together, a theological response was suggested which aims at transforming Christian-Muslim relationships in Nigeria. And because religious leaders belong to Lederach’s mid-range leadership level, it is hoped that a theology of conflict transformation will assist the Church to be practically involved in ensuring the desired future of tranquillity for Nigeria. The scope of such a task deserves to be charted, to which we shall now turn.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 39-50.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 61.

Scope and Limitation of Study

First, the focus of this thesis is on conflict in Nigeria. Although Africa is laden with conflict regions as it has been the case in Liberia (West Africa), Rwanda (East Africa) and former apartheid South Africa, this research does not deal with these conflicts. However, where relevant, mention was made about some of these conflicts.

Second, even in Nigeria, only the religious conflicts which occurred in Northern Nigeria were the main focus of investigation. Although there are pockets of religious conflicts in some parts of Southern Nigeria, they are quite minimal, in comparison with occurrences in the North, where there are more Muslims than Christians. Again, even in the North, it is not all conflicts that are religious conflicts, by my understanding. Therefore, this thesis is not centred on conflicts in Northern Nigeria which are not religious in nature. Further, even while discussing religious conflict in Northern Nigeria, I have attempted to look mainly at the inter-religious conflicts between Muslims and Christians and not the numerous intra-religious contestations and schisms within each tradition. Specifically, the investigation concerns conflicts between Christians and Muslims in Jos (2001) and Maiduguri (2006). The study therefore precludes in-depth investigation of places like Kano, Kaduna and Bauchi which have also been hotbeds of religious clashes.

As noted, Nigeria has a considerable number of adherents of the indigenous religions and they have sometimes had minor clashes with either Christians or Muslims. These indigenous religions possess a very high consciousness of ethnic identity. They perceive both Christians and Muslims as mercenaries of foreign religions, thus, traitors of the restoration of African independent identity.¹²¹ However, open clashes between them and either Christians or Muslims in Northern Nigeria are rare.

Conversely, the “politicization of religion and the religionization of politics”¹²² among Muslims and Christians in Nigeria were studied in this thesis and attention was given to the role of *Shari’a*, Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and radical Christian Pentecostalism in Nigeria’s religious conflicts. Also, general

¹²¹ Mutombo Nkulu-N’Sengha, “Interreligious Dialogue in Black Africa Among Christianity, Islam and African Traditional Religion, *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 33, 4, Fall 1996, 531.

¹²² Afe Adogame, “Politicization of Religion”, 128.

theories of conflict were discussed in relation to religious conflicts in Nigeria and the conceptual framework for conflict transformation follows the approach of John Paul Lederach. By exploring the Christian, Muslim, secular and indigenous approaches to conflict handling, the thesis established strengths and weaknesses which paved the way for suggesting a theology of hospitality as a practical approach for the Church's involvement in conflict transformation in Nigeria.

Organization of Work

This thesis has been organized into seven chapters. The first chapter is the general introduction to the entire study. It deals with the statement of the problem, the scope of the task and the key concepts used in the thesis. It describes Lederach's conceptual framework on conflict transformation which was adopted in the study and which largely influenced the arrangement of the chapters of this thesis.

Chapter two surveys literature to provide insights on the history of conflict studies; conflict theories and approaches to conflict handling in Nigeria. This backdrop assists one to comprehend the grounds already captured in this particular field of investigation before suggesting a new approach to conflict transformation. Chapter three discusses the issues of methodologies and methods of data analysis. Because of the multidisciplinary nature of 'conflict' and in view of the fact that the thesis seeks to make a theological contribution to conflict transformation, both socio-scientific and theological methodologies were adopted. Specifically, the qualitative methodology which employed the methods of semi-structured interviews was utilized and the approach of narrative analysis was employed in the presentation of data as assisted by the NVivo computer software. Also, the methodology of practical theology and elements of contextual and comparative theologies were engaged for the theological task of the thesis.

In view of the fact that Lederach holds that the episodes are the 'window' through which we see the epicentres of conflicts, chapter four examines the events of the two conflicts from the perspectives of informants in Jos and Maiduguri and emerging themes from the data gathered were presented. Discussions in this chapter include the perceived immediate and remote causes of the conflicts, the manifestations and the consequences. Chapter five explores the underlying roots (epicentres) of conflicts in

Nigeria in order to capture the context of the conflicts. Essential matters discussed include the issues of religious pluralism, ethnicity, colonization, politics, and economy. There cannot be a conflict transformation approach without adequately identifying these underlying factors of conflict in Nigeria. In chapter six, a theology of conflict transformation for contemporary Nigerian society is suggested, namely a theology of hospitality. The main goal of this chapter is to present the 'spirituality' of the theology of hospitality and its correlation with the lived experiences of conflict. How this theology practically engages contemporary issues of conflict in Nigeria, as short and long term strategies, is presented in the first part of chapter seven. The work is summarized and concluded in the second part.

CHAPTER TWO

DISCOURSES ON CONFLICT: A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The literature on conflict in general and conflict in Nigeria in particular is legion. This chapter reviews relevant discourses which provide insights for understanding the history of conflict studies, general conflict theories, and conflict handling in Nigeria.

A Brief Historiography of Conflict Studies

The brief historical evolution of conflict studies helps us to appreciate copious efforts which have been made to address issues of conflict worldwide. It has been divided into five periods in this study on the grounds of convenience and in the pattern of contemporary scholarship.

The Pre-1945 Conflict Studies

Ramsbotham *et al* have rooted modern conflict studies in 1918 with the establishment of international relations (IR) as a distinct academic discipline, spurred by the advocates of anti-war sentiments. With its first Chair endowed at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, in 1919, courses and researches in the dynamics of international relations emerged throughout the UK, Europe and North America between 1920 and 1945 in various institutes for the promotion of world peace. Also, the formation in 1924 of the University Federation for the League of Nations at Prague was associated with the yearning for international peace.¹²³

Jane Stroup traces one of the earliest scholarly researches on conflict to the 1927 comprehensive survey on the causes of war, initiated by the Social Science Research Committee of the University of Chicago under the direction of Quincy Write. It culminated in the production of a two-volume work published in 1942 with the title,

¹²³ Oliver Ramsbotham, Tom Woodhouse and Hugh Miall, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution: The Prevention, Management and Transformation of Deadly Conflicts*, Second Edition (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006), 34.

A Study of War.¹²⁴ Several important pioneering works were done at this period. Among them was Mary Parker Follett's work in the area of organizational behaviour and labour-management relations.¹²⁵ While all these researches were on, the Second World War began, which led to the formation of the most important institution to influence conflict studies, the United Nations, on October 24, 1945. This became a body which would play a greatly significant role in world order by stabilizing interstate relations and mitigating interstate conflicts.

Conflict Studies between 1945 and 1965

Ramsbotham *et al* have examined this period as a time when the first research institutions on conflicts and peace were established. For instance, after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, Theodore F. Lentz established the Peace Research Laboratory in Missouri.¹²⁶ Stroup highlights that when in 1945, the UN was established and later on UNESCO (United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization) the two bodies became the instruments of the revival of the Quincy Write-led work on the Causes of War. In 1947, UNESCO adopted a programme tagged the 'Tension Project', with the aim of encouraging social scientists in all countries to participate in research into the psychological and sociological bases of peace. This resulted in a volume entitled, *Tensions that Cause Wars*. By 1957, UNESCO had come up with another work, entitled: *The Nature of Conflict: Studies on the Sociological Aspects of International Tensions*. Stroup further recalls that earlier, in 1952, with the aim of starting a bulletin on the matter of peace and war, some psychologists came together and organized what they called, "Research Exchange on the Prevention of War" and by November, 1952, a bulletin with the same title was published. This journal ceased publication in 1956 and was replaced by the *Journal of Conflict Resolution* in 1957.¹²⁷ The new journal was the work of the Liverpool-born Professor of economics of the University of Michigan,

¹²⁴ M. Jane Stroup, "Some Notes on War and Peace", in *Conflict Resolution and World Education* ed. Stuart Mudd (Holland: Dr. W. Junk Publishers, 1966), 117.

¹²⁵ Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall, 35.

¹²⁶ Ibid, 40.

¹²⁷ Stroup, 118.

Kenneth Boulding; sociologist Robert Cooley Angell; social psychologist Herbert Kelman; and mathematician-biologist, Anatol Rapoport.¹²⁸

Tidwell has examined the works of George Simmel and Lewis Coser, during this period. Simmel's work, *Conflict*, was published in 1955. He argued that conflict could be integrative and that conflict may end in one of three ways, namely, compromise, conciliation or the victory of one party over the other. Coser published his *The Function of Social Conflict* in 1956 in which he contended that conflict could serve several useful purposes.¹²⁹ Coser also wrote on Ralf Dahrendorf, a German sociologist who published two books in 1957. In one Dahrendorf argued that there was no sociological theory that could encapsulate all the concepts of social conflicts. In the other he said conflict was caused by constant change in social life.¹³⁰

Stroup gives an account of a book published in 1959 by Kenneth Waltz, called, *Man, the State and War*. In this book, Waltz argued that the three causes of war were: the behaviour of man, the international organizations and states of anarchy. Also, Scimecca contends that in the mid 1950s, new concepts of conflict resolution began to spring up, most of which were connected to Lewis Coser.¹³¹

Scimecca says that in the mid 1960s, RR Blake, HA Shepard and JS Mouton, pointed out five ways of trying to deal with conflict. These men are credited with providing the basis for the use of the term, "mediator",¹³² a natural third party who is not authorized to decide for disputants but to help them in arriving at a negotiated solution. The early 1960s also featured prominently the contributions of John Galtung in Northern Europe and John Burton, an Australian Professor at University College, London.¹³³

¹²⁸ Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall, 40.

¹²⁹ Tidwell, 62-64.

¹³⁰ Coser, *Continuities*, p. 4-7.

¹³¹ Joseph A. Scimecca, "Conflict Resolution in the United States: The Emergence of a Profession" in *Conflict Resolution: Cross Cultural Perspective* eds., Kevin Avruch, Peter W. Black and Joseph A. Scimecca (London, Greenwood Press, 1991), 21.

¹³² Scimecca, 22.

¹³³ Ibid.

Conflict Studies between 1965 and 1985

According to Scimecca, between the late 1960s and a part of the 1980s, international conflicts began to adopt the *problem solving workshops approach* which were developed by the London group under John Burton, the Yale group under Leonard Doob and the Harvard group under Herbert Kelman. The first “International Problem Solving Workshop” is credited to Burton and the emphasis was on facilitators ensuring the use of dialogue in conflict resolution.¹³⁴

Tidwell again examines the works of Kurt Lewin and Morton Deutsch at this period. For Lewin, a person’s existence is tied to society and society’s existence is tied to persons. Therefore, conflict could be explained as the integration of the behaviour of the individual within a social construct. Deutsch, on the other hand, brought about the idea of ‘constructive’ and ‘destructive’ conflict.¹³⁵ By the 1980s, emphasis had shifted to the area of resolution of conflicts because the traditional view of conflict as evil had changed. As Kamil Koza said, “Conflict itself is no evil, but rather a phenomenon which can have constructive or destructive effect, depending on its management. Hence the emphasis has shifted towards an understanding of the different styles of managing conflicts.”¹³⁶ Also, a major development in conflict studies at this period was the establishment of the Centre for Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University, USA, in 1980. This was achieved through the effort of Bryant Wedge, a social psychiatrist and by 1982, it became the first institution to offer a postgraduate degree in Conflict Management.¹³⁷ Thus the 1980s became a period of expansion in the discipline of Conflict Resolution.

Conflict Studies between 1985 and 2005

The breakthrough, namely, that skills could be learned and developed for conflict resolution, which started in the 1980s, continued through the 1990s. Many

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Tidwell, 65-67.

¹³⁶ Kamil Koza, “Interpersonal Conflict Management Styles of Jordanian Managers” in *Conflict Resolution: Cross Cultural Perspective* eds. Kevin Avruch, Peter W. Black and Joseph A. Scimecca (London: Greenwood Press, 1991), 85.

¹³⁷ Kevin Avruch, “Culture and Conflict Resolution” in *Conflict Resolution*, 3.

Universities and Colleges began to offer training at the Masters Degree level. In 1988, the first PhD students were admitted to study Conflict Analysis and Resolution in the World at George Mason University in Virginia, USA and by 1996, there were a few doctoral programmes in Conflict Analysis and Resolution at the University of Uppsala in Sweden. Also, by the 1980s, the UN, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Organization of American States (OAS) had become involved in conflict projects. Apart from these, other groups were developing around the world.¹³⁸

Conflict Studies which Cut Across Several Periods

Across some or all the periods of conflict studies considered above, some conflict endeavours have had positive influence. Ramsbotham *et al* have emphasized the central role of the practice of pacifism as contained in the beliefs of Quakers and Mennonites in the historical development of conflict resolution. Many of the great scholars in peace and conflict studies came from this background and they greatly influenced the field. For example, Kenneth Boulding, one of the earliest experts in conflict studies was a Quaker. Also, John Howard Yoder and John Paul Lederach, leading scholars in international peace building, are of the Mennonite tradition. Again, the idea of non-violence as preached by Gandhi has cross-fertilized with academic efforts to proffer alternative approaches to political and social conflicts.¹³⁹ The same was taught by Martin Luther King Jr.

Although the studies examined above were mainly located in the Western world, it is important to be acquainted with them in the process of studying conflict in Nigeria. Like many other countries in Africa, Nigeria has benefited from Western conflict intervention approaches. In fact it is impossible to study conflict in Africa without making reference to the numerous conflict resolution programmes and mediation services from countries of the West. A typical case is the involvement of the UN in many post independence crises in Africa, including roles played during the Nigerian civil war. Therefore, conflict studies have had impact on every part of the world. And

¹³⁸ Koza, "Interpersonal Conflict" in *Conflict Resolution*, xi-xiv

¹³⁹ Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall, 38-39.

although conflict studies, in comparison with many other disciplines, is young; there is no disputing the fact that it has received serious and elaborate scholarly attention. With this background on the study of conflicts, we shall turn to some theories which have been developed to explain conflict.

General Conflict Theories

A study of religious conflict in Nigeria demands that some general conflict theories are examined. Theories inform both conflict behaviour and resolution. They try to explain the causes of conflict and also attempt to guide the path of conflict intervention. According to Tidwell, theory is “how you might get from point A to point B”. He says further: “In conflict resolution this [theory] is very vital. Theory steers the would-be resolver towards some behaviours and away from others.”¹⁴⁰ The purpose of this section therefore is to explore certain schools of thought on the causes of conflict and to attempt to explain the Nigerian religious conflicts. There is a large volume of literature written about the nature and theories of conflict. We will briefly consider three broad theoretical categories that seek to explain conflict and try to locate their relevance to religious conflict in Nigeria. They are the Inherency (Micro) Theories, the Contingency (Macro) Theories and the Eclectic (Hybrid) Theories.

The Inherency (Micro) Theories

These theories, developed by psychologists, hold that conflict is inherent in man and Sigmund Freud has been identified as one of its most influential proponents. For Freud, human beings have the opposing instincts of life and death. The death instinct could be destructive and when administered towards others, it is expressed in aggression which may turn harmful.¹⁴¹ Three expressions of the micro theories are here considered.

¹⁴⁰ Tidwell, 61.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 42.

The Modern Stimulus-Response Theory

Donald Miller and his associates were responsible for the development of this theory which asserts conflicts ensue “whenever drives or responses compete significantly with one another. In this case personality maladjustment is the result of conflicting drives that block the individual from gaining a satisfying state of affairs for a relatively prolonged period of time”.¹⁴² This theory is very much concerned with individual conflict which causes a person to act in certain abnormal ways. Though this kind of conflict is not the concern of this study, it is important to note that for conflict to take place, individuals must be involved. Therefore, individual maladjustments, though hard to determine, may not be entirely precluded in explaining religious conflict in Nigeria.

The Behaviourist Theories

William Cunningham presents these theories as having biological or psychological explanations because they are concerned with the individual’s role in conflict. Within these behaviourist theories are theories of frustration-aggression, social identity theories and the animal behaviour theories. These assumptions came from early psychologists who claimed that there are innate biological instincts which predispose humans towards aggression and conflictive behaviour.¹⁴³ B.F Skinner also contributed immensely to the role of intrinsic behaviour in conflict. He said: “At best, warlike behaviour is acquired because of an inherent capacity to be reinforced by gain in territory or damage inflicted upon others”.¹⁴⁴ This innate tendency in man is argued to be the cause of war, but the complexity and the intensity of religious conflict in Nigeria go far beyond a behaviourist explanation.

¹⁴² Austin Grigg, “Conflict”, *Encyclopaedia Americana*, 1977, 537.

¹⁴³ William G. Cunningham Jr., “Conflict Theory and the Conflict in Northern Ireland”, *A Thesis Submitted in the Complete Fulfilment of the Requirements for the degree of Master of Literature in Political Studies*, The University of Auckland, 1998. See also <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/conflict/cunningham.htm>, May 9, 12

¹⁴⁴ B.F. Skinner, *About Behaviourism* (London: Jonathan Cape Ltd, 1974), 42.

The Decision-Theoretic Contribution

Zeev Maoz has examined a social psychology theory called the ‘decision-theoretic’ contribution to peace studies. This contribution combines the ‘rational choice’ and the ‘cognitive’ approaches to conflict. The rational choice approach sees decisions to be made by one all-powerful individual and the cognitive approach sees conflict as initiated by human error, a product of man’s miscalculations. The combined approaches focus on the individual’s reasoning processes in his interactions with policy groups on the causes, courses and consequences of war. The outcome is that conflict is man-made and could be unmade by man.¹⁴⁵

There is no doubt that Inherent (Micro) theories, based on human innate behaviour, have a place in our analysis of human conflict. However, these explanations of human behaviour alone cannot explain how and why Muslims and Christians could be so enmeshed in brutal killing of one another, having lived together in peace for a long time.

The Contingency (Macro) Theories

The contingency theories argue that aggression and all its expressions are not innate but dependent upon external factors. These theories focus on the significance of groups in the explanation of conflict. They argue that conflict may come from conscious acts like culture, politics and economy as played out by groups. Like the micro theories, the macro theories are also expressed under different schools of thought. Some of them are being considered here.

The Primordial Conflict Theory

According to Kieh, this theory is based on the contiguity of immediate kinship, group, religious community, particular language and specific social classes which people belong to. These groups have coercive power. The primordial theory says that the clan, racial or ethnic groups are the principal actors in social, political and economic lives. The collective action of each primordial group is governed by its

¹⁴⁵ Zeev Maoz, “Choosing War, Choosing Peace: Decision Theoretical Contributions to Peace Research” in *Conflict and Social Psychology* ed. Knud S. Larsen (London: Sage Publication, 1993), 16-20.

cultural peculiarities. In the course of inter-primordial relation there will be both hegemonic and subordinate groups who may form alliances to pursue political ambition. Such alliances are usually in the favour of the hegemonic group. If the hegemonic group excludes the subordinate group from political or economic privileges, then a primordially based conflict may occur. The primordial theory therefore is concerned about the various conflicts caused by ethnic diversity.¹⁴⁶ This theory is especially important for the understanding of the dynamics of religious conflict in Nigeria because ethnicity is a powerful identity marker alongside religion.

The Class Theory

Tidwell opined that the most popular of the contingency theorists was the German philosopher, Karl Marx through whom the class theory emerged.¹⁴⁷ Marx had argued in *The Communist Manifesto* that each person in society is to be classified by his relationship to the mode of production either as an owner or a subaltern. Owners of properties determine the distribution of resources and their exploitation of the subaltern determines the sources and subsistence of conflict. The difference in the distribution of resources and power will of necessity lead to the emergence of social conflicts and “the major cause of the conflict is the development of class consciousness by members of the subaltern class.”¹⁴⁸ Marx’s concern was not with the individual but the group – the class. He did not speak on the private drives in people but on the collective interests of categories of people acting in their particular roles in the social drama of life. An example is the labour unions who muster their collective interests by organizing strikes to fight for their wages.¹⁴⁹ In his overview of the *Manifesto*, Laski comments: “So ruthless is this exploitation that in sheer self-defence the workers are compelled to combine to fight their masters...the

¹⁴⁶ George Klay Kieh Jr., “Theories of Conflict Resolution”, in *Zones of Conflict in Africa: Theories and Cases* eds. George Klay Kieh, Jr. and Ida Rousseau Mukennge (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2002), 10.

¹⁴⁷ Tidwell, 49.

¹⁴⁸ Kieh, “Theories”, 11.

¹⁴⁹ Coser, *Continuities*, 142.

consolidation of the workers as a class hostile to their exploiters will give the proletariat inevitable victory.”¹⁵⁰

On the Nigerian religious conflicts, such explanations concerning the bourgeoisie and the proletariat cannot be central. Although certain explanations given by respondents during interviews on the cause of religious conflicts included unemployment and poverty, they still do not justify Marx’s theory for explaining religious conflicts in Nigeria. The conflicts were not between the poor and the rich. Rather, they were between Christians and Muslims; mainly between the poor and the poor. However, it is noted that the poor sometimes fight the poor at the behest of the rich.

Protracted Social Conflict Theory (PSC)

Miall *et al* and Ronald Fisher described this theory of Edward Azar as having received very little acknowledgement. In the early 1970s, Azar tried to demonstrate his analysis of the PSC. According to him, persistent struggles by communal groups for the basic necessities of life like food, shelter, security, recognition and participation in both the economic and political arena of life could be calibrated as protracted social conflict. Azar gave examples of countries like Lebanon, Philippines, Israel, Sudan, Cyprus, Sri Lanka, Ethiopia and South Africa as places where prolonged conflicts had existed. For Azar, the role of the state to either provide or deny basic communal needs is a major factor in the promotion of conflict. Azar’s PSC is therefore based on the deprivation of basic human needs.¹⁵¹ However, struggles for the necessities of life, though visible in Nigeria, are not sufficient to explain the religious conflicts there. However, one can say that within the contingency theories, there are helpful concepts for understanding the religious

¹⁵⁰ Harold J. Laski, *Communist Manifesto: Socialist Landmark* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1948), 36. See also A.J.P. Taylor, *Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels: The Communist Manifesto* (London: The Penguin Group, 1967), 32-33. He contends that Marx used the class explanation to cover even national and international conflicts. For Marx, international conflicts were a result of “the exploitation of one nation by another”.

¹⁵¹ Miall, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse, 68 -71. See also, Ronald J. Fisher in his “Interactive Conflict Resolution,” in *Peacemaking in International Conflict: Methods and Techniques* eds. I. William Zartman, Woodhouse and Miall and J. Lewis Rasmussen (Washington D.C: Institute of Peace Press, 239-272).

conflicts in Nigeria. Christians and Muslims in Nigeria are definitely identity groups which view each other as out-groups in times of conflict.

The Eclectic (Hybrid) Theories

As the inherency and contingency theories have been insufficient to explain religious conflicts in Nigeria, we shall now turn to some scholars who have attempted to synthesize both theories to explain conflict. The basic assumption of the eclectic theories is that behaviour is governed by both inherent and contingency factors and they cannot be separated.

Kieh explained that the eclectic theories argue that civil conflicts are products of multiple factors. Factors leading to a conflict may be political, social, economic, historical, cultural, and psychological. Given the complexity of the societies we live in and the complexity of civil conflicts, these theories argue that a single variable cannot explain the cause of conflict.¹⁵² The eclectic theories have a way of encapsulating several other theories. Tidwell also situates Kurt Lewin's 'Field Theory' in this category because it attempts to integrate both individual behaviour and social context in conflict. Lewin demonstrates that both the individual and the group are interdependent and therefore, both are responsible for conflict.¹⁵³ Therefore, in the explanation of conflict, there is a convergence of human behaviour which is inherent and human behaviour which is contingent.

Kieh again contends that eclectic theories suggest two basic causes of conflict in every conflict. On the one hand, conflict is caused by 'contingent' reasons. These are conditions rooted in the fabric of society. However, they are hardly ever capable of causing conflicts on their own. On the other hand there are 'triggers' of conflict which are the inherent (immediate) causes of conflict.¹⁵⁴ Cunningham has also argued for the eclectic theories of explaining conflict. He called them a fusion of the micro and the macro theories. By micro theories, he was referring to the behavioural

¹⁵² Kieh, 12.

¹⁵³ Tidwell, 65.

¹⁵⁴ Kieh, 13. See also Tidwell's *Conflict Resolved?* in which he called the eclectic theory the 'Interactionist' theory, 55.

theories which situate conflict in the individual's subconscious system. By macro theories, he meant the classical theories which situate conflict in inter-group relations. He sought explanation of Northern Ireland's conflict in the merger of both the micro and the macro theories into 'hybrid' theories.¹⁵⁵ Of course even these eclectic theories have been criticized, primarily because they do not narrow down conflict to singular causation.

The theories enumerated above are various tools for analyzing the causes of conflict. None of them is capable of adequately explaining the cause of religious conflicts in Nigeria. The research carried out in Jos and Maiduguri showed that the conflicts, though largely religious, included several other intrinsic and extrinsic factors. The role of religion has to be analyzed in reference to these 'lesser' factors. And though the eclectic theory in a Western construct may not manifest itself in the same way as in the Nigerian situation, it can help to explain some elements of the Nigerian situation. Therefore, the eclectic theories can be contextualized for the understanding of the Nigerian religious conflicts which will also assist in determining the appropriate path to managing and transforming them.

Conflicts in Nigeria

There are several existing works by scholars on Nigerian conflicts. While most of the studies only present accounts of conflicts, a few others have engaged conflict resolution. John Peel dealt with issues of wars and conflicts in Yorubaland¹⁵⁶ and Toyin Falola traced the historical roots of various religious and ethnic conflicts in Nigeria.¹⁵⁷ Olayemi Akinwumi has synthesized the post-independent conflicts of Nigeria from the point of view of political history¹⁵⁸ while John Gbor's *Nigeria:*

¹⁵⁵ Cunningham, 12.

¹⁵⁶ JDY Peel, *Religious Encounter and the Making of the Yoruba* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004).

¹⁵⁷ Toyin Falola, *Violence in Nigeria: The Crisis of Religious Politics and Secular Ideologies* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 1998). See also Dan Osy Okanya, *Political Violence in Nigeria* (Enugu: Auto –Century Publishers, 1999).

¹⁵⁸ Olayemi Akinwumi, *Crises and Conflicts in Nigeria: A Political History Since 1960* (London: Transaction Publishers, 2004).

From Pre-Colonial Era to the Present, provides views on military history.¹⁵⁹ Also, Rotgak Gofwen, a sociologist, traced the historical roots of religious conflicts in Northern Nigeria and its impact on individual rights in modern Nigeria.¹⁶⁰ In another work, Gofwen and Ishaku examined the 'State of Emergency' which was placed on Plateau State on May 18, 2004, on the account of the ethno-religious conflicts which engulfed the state. They advanced a wide range of arguments to fault the Federal Government's decision.¹⁶¹

Sam Egwu's study of religious and ethnic conflicts in Nigeria covers about three decades, pointing out social and political manipulations of religion and ethnicity.¹⁶² He also investigated the matters of ethnicity and citizenship in the recurrent conflicts of Jos and suggested a frontal confrontation of the indigenization problems in Nigeria.¹⁶³ In the same vein, Alubo examined the multiplicity of ethnicity in the central region and recommended paths to harmonious co-existence of Nigerians.¹⁶⁴

The history of various political conflicts in Nigeria, from the Aba riot of 1929 to the 1983 governorship elections in Ondo State, was traced by Okanya. His work sheds light on the background against which the various conflicts of Nigeria have thrived.¹⁶⁵ Also, Enwerem's work on religion and politics in Nigeria traced the origin of CAN and portrayed colonialism as the context of the Christian-Muslim conflicts. While he applauded the indigenous religions for their tolerance, he noted the exclusivist features of both Islam and Christianity and challenged them to mutual interrelationship.¹⁶⁶

¹⁵⁹ John WT Gbor (ed.) *Military History: Nigeria From Pre-Colonial Era to the Present* (Lagos: Longman, 2004).

¹⁶⁰ Rotgak I. Gofwen, *Religious Conflicts in Northern Nigeria and Nation Building* (Kaduna: Human Rights Monitor, 2004).

¹⁶¹ Rotgak Gofwen and Jonathan Ishaku, *State of Emergency: Our Stand by Plateau Patriots* (Lagos: St. Stephen Book House Inc.), 2006.

¹⁶² Egwu, *Ethnic and Religious Violence*.

¹⁶³ Samuel Gabriel Egwu, *Ethnicity and Citizenship in Urban Nigeria: The Jos Case 1960-2000*, A Thesis in the Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Jos, 2004.

¹⁶⁴ Alubo, *Ethnic Conflicts*, 225.

¹⁶⁵ Okanya, *Political Violence in Nigeria*.

¹⁶⁶ Iheanyi M. Enwerem, *A Dangerous Awakening* (Ibadan: IFRA, 1995).

Isaac Albert discussed the historical perspective to the Hausa-Igbo conflicts in Kano between 1953 and 1991. Apart from the economic aggressiveness of the Igbo, he identified Islam and Christianity as factors behind their violent clashes.¹⁶⁷ In his *Nigeria's Decades of Blood*, Jan Boer narrated various violent happenings in Nigeria¹⁶⁸ and Debki discussed the Sharia issues and their accompanying tragedies in Kaduna.¹⁶⁹ Again, Isidore Nwanaju published his intercultural study of the Christian-Muslim relationship in Nigeria, providing theological reflections on the path to inter-religious peace and accord in Nigeria.¹⁷⁰

Sa'ad Abubakar's study of the impact of religious extremism on national security in Nigeria noted the rise of Islamic revivalism and a growing detestation of the West. He recommended ways of mitigating religious violence in Nigeria.¹⁷¹ Also, Dashan examined the causes and impact of conflicts in Plateau State and how they could be managed.¹⁷² Several Muslim scholars have made contributions to the subject of conflict in Nigeria from the Islamic perspective of peace building.¹⁷³

Furthermore, Ige explored the role of inter-faith dialogue as an antidote to religious crisis in Nigeria¹⁷⁴ while Duguru and Yakubu investigated various ethno-religious crises which occurred in Jos. They gave suggestions on ways of achieving peace and charged the government to settle permanently the indigene/settler question.¹⁷⁵ Again,

¹⁶⁷ Isaac Olawale Albert, *Inter-Ethnic Relation in a Nigerian City: A Historical Perspective of the Hausa-Igbo Conflicts in Kano, 1953 – 1991* (Ibadan: IFRA, 1993).

¹⁶⁸ Jan H. Boer, *Nigeria's Decades of Blood* (Jos: Stream Christian Publishers, 2003).

¹⁶⁹ B.E.E. Debki, *The Tragedy of Sharia, Cry and the Voice of Masses* (n.p. and n.p. 2000).

¹⁷⁰ Isidore Nwanaju, *Christian-Muslim Relations in Nigeria* (Lagos: Free Enterprise Publishers, 2005).

¹⁷¹ Abubakar, *Religious Extremism*, xi.

¹⁷² Obed Gudeke Kutdiyel Dashan, *Managing Conflict Situations in Plateau State: A Case Study of Yelwa-Shenda*, An Individual Research Project Submitted to the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, Kuru, In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for the Award of the Member of the National Institute (mni), Senior Course No 26, 2004.

¹⁷³ Dennis Ityavyar and Zacharys Gundu eds. *Muslim/Christian Dialogue on Peace in Jos* (Jos: Inter-Gender, 2004). See also Dennis Itwyavyar and Zachrys Gundu, *Stakeholders in Peace and Conflicts* (Jos: Inter-Gender, 2004).

¹⁷⁴ Joseph Abodunrin Oladupo Ige, *Interfaith Dialogue as an Antidote to Religious Crisis in Nigeria*, A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Religious Studies, University of Jos in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for the Bachelor of Arts Degree, 1991.

¹⁷⁵ Esther John Duguru, *Beyond the September 7th 2001 Ethno-Religious Crisis on the Jos –Plateau*, A Research Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Religious Studies, University of Jos in

Ogbu Kalu discussed four models (instrumentalist, manipulation, rainbow, and fundamentalist) of conflict transformation in Nigeria. He called on the state to prevent conflict by alleviating poverty, providing employment, ensuring good governance and creating an enabling environment for cordiality among Nigerians.¹⁷⁶ Danfulani and Fwatshak¹⁷⁷ studied issues of religious conflict in Jos and suggested recipes for lasting peace. In addition to these scholarly works, there exist a gamut of works produced by various individuals, government agencies, NGO's, Christians, Muslims, newspaper and magazine reports; audio-visual materials and other forms of work on conflict issues.

Approaches to Conflict Handling in Nigeria

Conflict leads to the deployment of various processes of intervention and this section explores how some of them have been used in Nigeria. Oyeshola¹⁷⁸ and Abu-Nimer¹⁷⁹ have argued that conflicts could be handled by both peaceful/non-violent and forceful/violent means. In this section, we shall explore conflict discourses under these sub-heads.

Violent Approaches to Conflict Handling in Nigeria

Violence has been described as entailing “any justified or illegitimate force that is exerted, physically or otherwise, by one thing (event or instance, group or person,

Partial Fulfilment for the Award of Master of Arts in Religious Studies, 2006. See also *The Impact of Ethno-Religious Conflict on the Nigerian Society: A Study of the September 7, 2001 Crisis on the Jos Plateau* by Joseph Yakubu, A Research Project to the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Maiduguri, in Partial Fulfilment of the Award of BSc. Degree in Sociology and Anthropology.

¹⁷⁶ Ogbu U. Kalu, “Religion and Conflict Transformation in Africa: Discourses on Nigerian Religious Conflicts, 1980-1998” (Unpublished Paper).

¹⁷⁷ Umar Habila Dadem Danfulani and Sati U. Fwatshak, “Briefing: The September 2001 Events in Jos, Nigeria”, *African Affairs: The Journal of Royal African Society* Vol. 101, No. 403, April 2002, 254- 255.

¹⁷⁸ Dokun Oyeshola, O.P, *Conflict and Context of Conflict Resolution*, (Ile-Ife: Obafemi Awolowo University Press Limited, 2005), 101. See also Hizkias Assefa, “Reconciliation” in *Peace-Building: A Field Guide* ed. Luc Reyhler and Thania Paffenholz (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), 336.

¹⁷⁹ Mohammed Abu-Nimer, “A Framework for Nonviolence and Peacebuilding in Islam,” *Journal of Law and Religion*, Vol. 15, No. 1/2. (2000 - 2001), p. 217. Also, Assefa has called attention to the limitations of both violent nor non-violent methods of conflict intervention. See Hizkias Assefa, “Reconciliation”, 338.

and perhaps, word and object) on another".¹⁸⁰ As such, several conflicts have been controlled, suppressed, settled or resolved by the use of violence in Nigeria, particularly by the government. Alex Gboyega and Vihiga Iyorlu have explored the role of military force in quelling the Tiv ethnic riots of early 1960s.¹⁸¹ Also, Charles Nixon, Arthur Nwakwo and Alex Gboyega have discussed the events of the Nigerian Civil War which ensued as the Federal Government's approach to defeating the ploy of secession by the former Eastern Region of Nigeria. The resulting war which began on July 5, 1967, lasted for two and a half years, resulting in over a million casualties from starvation, diseases and military massacre.¹⁸²

Furthermore, the Maitastine Religious Riots of 1980 in Kano also attracted violent handling. According to Adewale and Isichei, it was in a manner of a civil war when the police and army engaged this Islamic sect under the leadership of Alhaji Mohammed Marwa. Because of his inflammatory preaching, Marwa had earlier been jailed in 1963 and in 1975. By 1977, his movement had gained momentum and in Yan Awaki where he resided, he became a self-imposed aristocrat, taking over houses from their owners. In November 1980, the government of Kano state gave him and his followers a quit notice from Kano. Rather than comply, Marwa and his group prepared for war.¹⁸³ On December 18, 1980, a crackdown between the police and Marwa's men led to the routing of the police. To this affront, a combined team of the army and air force responded with superior military might, resulting in casualties of about 4,177 persons, mainly members of the movement.¹⁸⁴ Again, the

¹⁸⁰ Hent de Vries, *Religion and Violence*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 1.

¹⁸¹ Alex Gboyega "Nigeria: Conflict Unresolved" in *Governance as Conflict Management* in ed. William Zartman (Washington D.C: Bookings Institution Press, 1997), 164. See Vihiga Iyorlu's *Quest for Social Justice and Non-Violent Resolution of Conflicts in Nigeria*, A Thesis Submitted to the School of Post Graduate Studies, Department of Religious Studies, Faculty of Arts, University of Jos, in Partial Fulfillment of the Award of the Degree of Master of Arts (M.A), Ethics and Philosophy, 2006, 47.

¹⁸² Charles R. Nixon, "Self Determination: The Nigeria/Biafra Case", *World Politics*, Vol. 24:44, July 1972, 473. See also Arthur A. Nwakwo, *Nigeria: The Challenges of Biafra* (Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishing Co. Ltd, 1980), 12. See Gboyega, 165. See also Federal Executive Council Publication, *Background Notes on the Nigerian Crisis*, published in Lagos by the Federal Executive Council, October 1967, 4-5.

¹⁸³ O.A. Adewale, "The Maitastine Uprisings: Towards a Possible Extermination", An Unpublished Paper, Ogbomoso, May 1988.

¹⁸⁴ Elizabeth Isichei, "The Maitastine Risings in Nigeria 1980-85: A Revolt of the Disinherited", *The Journal of Religion in Africa*, 17, 3, October, 1987, 194.

attack on Odi village by government security agents on November 20, 1999, in a ruthless military operation,¹⁸⁵ and the violent massacre of the people of Zaki-Biam as fall-out of the Jukun/Tiv conflicts, have gone down in history as unprecedented acts of violent conflict intervention.¹⁸⁶ Also, violent handling of conflict has occurred in the management of several other conflicts, notably in Zango Kataf, Ife/Modakeke, and parts of Niger Delta.

The use of coercion or force to handle conflicts in Nigeria has been seriously criticized on several grounds.¹⁸⁷ First, government is accused of repeatedly ignoring the warning signals of danger until it is too late. Second, violent handling of conflict is said to be merely temporary, leading to conflict regeneration as in the case of the Maitastine group in Bulumkutu (October 26, 1982), Yola (February 27, 1984), and Gombe (April 29, 1985).¹⁸⁸ Also, after the levelling of Odi and Zaki-Biam villages, the innocent victims have been left in a state worse than their original deplorable conditions. The use of force has not made life better or resolved the issues that led to the conflicts. Rather, as in the case of Odi, restive youths in the Niger Delta have continued to gruesomely murder law enforcement agents through more sophisticated means. Consequently, kidnapping of foreign nationals in oil service regions has become a lucrative business.¹⁸⁹

Non-Violent Approaches to Conflict Handling in Nigeria

While it is true that violent approaches have been commonly adopted in handling Nigerian conflicts, there are also numerous non-violent approaches that have been employed both by government and non-governmental stake holders. Four such approaches will be considered in this section, namely: the Traditional African approaches, the Government approaches, the NGOs' approaches, and the interfaith approaches.

¹⁸⁵ <http://www.africaaction.org/docs99/odi9912.htm>

¹⁸⁶ Vihiga Iyorlu, *The Quest*, 33-36. See also "Nigeria: Soldiers Massacre Civilians in Revenge Attack in Benue State", New York, October 25, 2001, <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2001/10/25/nigeri3116.htm>

¹⁸⁷ Imran Abdulrahman, "Management of Religious Conflict in Nigeria: The Form of Government Intervention", *Ife Psychologia*, 9, 3, 2001, 67.

¹⁸⁸ Isichei, "Maitastine", 198-199.

The Traditional African Society and Conflict Handling

Ayisi says that the term “traditional African” alludes to the indigenous African ways of life in the pre-colonial era, without any implication of crudeness; when the African people managed their own affairs without Western influence. Tradition also refers to the legacy of the past, including the transformations and changes through which this past has gone.¹⁹⁰ These traditional ways have influenced conflict management in Nigeria. According to Zartman, though Africa is made up of thousands of societies in different settings, there are a lot of commonalities among them.¹⁹¹ Therefore, to say ‘Africa’ here also means ‘Nigeria’. Ayisi further contends that “in order to understand the basic principles on which human society functions, we must know something about the institutions of the society.”¹⁹² These institutions are stuffed with values which weigh significantly on the traditional conflict intervention procedures. According to Oyesola, traditional values are profoundly religious, interrogating the sacred and the profane, the spiritual and the physical, and above all, the existence of God.¹⁹³ A summary of these values will be given below.

In Africa, the family is considered the smallest institution or the basic unit of the society. As such, any teaching on African society must include materials on the family.¹⁹⁴ But it was the extended family system, rather than the nuclear family, that was the norm. According to Mbiti, a child lived with his parents, uncles, cousins, grandparents and other close relatives. The traditional family also included the departed relatives who, although dead, were kept alive in the memory of the living relatives. They were believed to still be interested in the affairs of the families to

¹⁸⁹ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/6691183.stm>

¹⁹⁰ Eghosa Osaghae, “Applying Traditional Methods to Modern Conflict: Possibilities and Limits” in *Traditional Cures for Modern Conflicts* ed. I William Zartman (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc, 2000), 204.

¹⁹¹ I. William Zartman, “Introduction: African Traditional Conflict ‘Medicine’,” *Traditional Cures*, 5.

¹⁹² Eric O. Ayisi, *An Introduction to the Study of African Culture* (London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1972), 2.

¹⁹³ Oyesola, 139.

¹⁹⁴ Diane Kayongo-Male and Philista Onyango, *The Sociology of the African Family* (London: Longman Group Ltd., 1984), 1.

which they belonged in their life time.¹⁹⁵ The basic pattern of the traditional family is that every individual was an integral part of the community and an “individual does not and cannot exist alone except corporately.”¹⁹⁶ Therefore, the community of the living and that of the ‘living’ dead were considered crucial for conflict handling.

Next to the family in traditional Africa is the clan, consisting of several families¹⁹⁷ and several clans formed the villages. These divisions of the traditional society were involved in conflict handling, depending on its magnitude. The African societies also considered a category of people as specialists and related to them as such on all key issues of life. Among them were the medicine-men, rain-makers, priests and kings.¹⁹⁸ Because they all had close affinity with the spirit world, they were not seen as ordinary people. Their presence in the affairs of men was perceived as the invocation of the sacred, particularly in attempts to manage conflict. Mbiti argues that the physical and spiritual universe operated as a unit and it was difficult to draw a line of distinction between them. Of the spiritual universe, the divinities and the ancestors were of crucial importance. Divinities were believed to be created by God. They were associated with God and often represented Him.¹⁹⁹ Above all the divinities is the Supreme God. Africans believed they originated from Him.²⁰⁰ All the institutions and systems of society mentioned above are crucial to a proper understanding of the traditional African approach to conflict intervention.

Family conflict was a common phenomenon which was coped with at the family level. The philosophy was that of avoiding the ‘outside washing of dirty linen’.²⁰¹ Earnest Nwazie has discussed extensively on family dispute settlement among the Igbo of Eastern Nigeria where the family head (*onyi*) took charge of settlement in a

¹⁹⁵ John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (London: Heinemann, 1969), 108.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 108.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 166.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 75-76.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 48. See Elizabeth Isichei’s “The Mwahavul, Mupun, Njak and Ngas: An Introduction to Their Oral History” in *Jos Oral History and Literature Texts* ed. Elizabeth Isichei (Jos: University of Jos, 1981). See also Dond et al in *The Mumuye*, p.81 and J. P. Dada, Z.M. Mangoro and J.J. Williams, in their *The Kamwe (Higi) People of Adamawa State*, (Kaduna: Apani Publishers, 2005), 34.

²⁰¹ Dianne and Onyango, 63.

gathering of the extended family. He would break the kola and invoke the presence of the family ancestors in the settlement of the case. Situated in the centre of the gathering is the family oath object (*ofò*) to which the listeners would swear impartiality in their judgement. Disputants would also take their stand beside the family oath object and one after the other present their sides to the disagreement. After this, the men and women of the larger family were allowed to make comments. When the *onyi* considered that they had spoken exhaustively on the case, he stood up to make the pronouncement. Employing several proverbs, he would point out the wrong of each party in the conflict and impose a fine on the one considered guilty.²⁰² When disputes were between families in a village or within members of an ethnic group, such cases were referred to the elders of the families or the headman or chief in a village. Intervention in disputes was not for the purpose of ‘losing’ or ‘winning’. Rather, the goal in the traditional conflict management was for a win-win outcome, in the interest of peace and harmony.²⁰³ Traditional conflict management thus sought reconciliation and the preservation of social and cosmic balance, as much as possible.²⁰⁴ In traditional conflict management, most of the responsibility rested on elders. Because of their age and wealth of experience, they assumed authority for final decision making.²⁰⁵ Among the Igbo, despite the advent of the Police Force and the Magistrate courts, cases are still referred to the village tribunal.²⁰⁶

Oyesola has explored conflict handling among the Yoruba. Disputes were traditionally handled in accordance with their social boundaries. Thus there were family courts which dealt with family related conflicts under the family head (*bale*); the courts of the council of elders in the compound which looked at cases involving the extended family under the extended family head (*Mogaji*); societal courts which handled issues concerning members of various societies in the communities under

²⁰² Earnest Nwazie, “Social Relations and Peacekeeping Among Igbo” in *Traditional Cures*, 16 – 18.

²⁰³ Namonde Masina, “Xhosa Practices of Ubuntu for South Africa” in *Traditional Cures*, 171.

²⁰⁴ Francis M. Deeng, “Reaching Out: A Dinka Principle of Conflict Management.” in *Traditional Cures*, 98.

²⁰⁵ Guy Olivier Faure, “Traditional Conflict Management in Africa and China”, *Traditional Cures*, 156-157. See also Edmond Kwam Koussi’s, “West Coast Diplomacy Among the Akan and Their Neighbours”, *Traditional Cures*, 73.

²⁰⁶ Nwazie, 25

the leader (*Olori egbe*); and the court of the king (*Oba*) which served as the supreme court, dealing with matters that involved the village or town. If a small community was the domain of the conflict, resolution was handled through the *baale* (ward head).²⁰⁷ In conflicts connected with the domain of the occult, ‘specialists’ were involved.²⁰⁸

Although the traditional Hausa/Fulani systems have almost been completely submerged by Islam, Ibraheem cautions limiting lifestyle in Northern Nigeria to Islamic ways alone. He argues that the indigenous religions in the North have been resilient despite over 500 years of vigorous Islamic campaigns.²⁰⁹ Also, scholars have observed that some Fulani stock have retained their indigenous religions despite their long Islamic history.²¹⁰ Abubakar mentioned the role of “a variety of titled officials” that ensured effective conflict handling.²¹¹ The traditional society was organized into guilds of butchers, hunters, farmers, drummers, warriors, medicine men, horse riders, fishermen, traders etc. As such, every adult belonged to a traceable guild. The leader of each guild was directly responsible to the local chiefs or kings and when conflicts involved members of a particular group, their leaders helped to handle them.²¹² Further, Bagudu contends that in central Nigeria, traditional conflict handling was a tripartite system in which the offender, the offended and the community were involved in interactions. Rifts between people were considered a distortion of societal harmony²¹³ and settlement was done in the village square under

²⁰⁷ Oyeshola, 148-150. For more on the Yoruba, see also N.A Fadipe, *The Sociology of the Yoruba* (Ibadan: University Press, 1970), 354.

²⁰⁸ Namonde, “Xhosa Practices”, 175.

²⁰⁹ Jibrin Ibraheem, Religion and Political Turbulence in Nigeria”, *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 29, 1, 1991, p.120. See also, Ibrahim Madauci, Yahaya Isa and Bello Daura’s *Hausa Customs* (Zaria: Northern Nigerian Publishing Company, 1968), p.77 and AJN Major’s *Hausa Superstitions and Customs*, (London, John Bale Sons and Danielsson Ltd, 1913), 109-157.

²¹⁰ George Moses, “The Fulani”, in *Ethnic and Cultural Diversity in Nigeria* eds. Marcellina U. Okechie-Offoha and Matthew N.O. Sadiku (Trenton: African World Press, Inc., 1996), 31.

²¹¹ Sultan Mohammad Sa’ad Abubakar, “Muslim-Christian Relations in Nigeria”, *This Day*, Friday, November 16, 2007, 88.

²¹² Ibid.

²¹³ Nankin Bagudu ed. *Recrudescence Civil Disturbances and Human Rights: The Jos and State-Wide Crises* (Jos: League for Human Rights, 2004), 215-216

the leadership of elders and headmen. In that way the interests of all were guaranteed. Guilty persons were either scolded or required to make restitutions.²¹⁴

At the various levels of traditional conflict handling, certain techniques were responsible for the achievement of positive results. According to Bozeman, there was the assumption that life was ruled by invisible powers which were capable of both benevolent and malevolent activities. However, it was the malevolent activities and actors that were feared more. Therefore, ritual practices to assuage their negative influences were constantly administered through the services of religious specialists. These specialists were the human intermediaries between men and the spiritual realm. The ancestors and divinities were intermediaries on a higher level and they helped men in communication with God.²¹⁵ In conflict situations, the ancestors were the ones ultimately offended because they served as the invisible guards of families and communities.²¹⁶ In view of this, their presence was always invoked in conflict handling, which caused the whole procedures to be taken very seriously.

Other factors which contributed to the success of traditional conflict handling include respect for elders,²¹⁷ fear of oath taking, curses and swearing;²¹⁸ the use of proverbs,²¹⁹ the obligation of rituals,²²⁰ the demand for restitution,²²¹ the concepts of 'jocular' relationship²²² and inter-clan marriages.²²³ Lastly, diplomacy was commonly employed in the ancient empires of Africa for the promotion of harmonious living.²²⁴

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Bozeman, 259 – 260.

²¹⁶ Mbiti., *African Religions and Philosophy*, 83.

²¹⁷ Oyeshola, 151-152

²¹⁸ Ayisi, 50. See also Edmond Kwam Koussi, "West Coast Diplomacy Among the Akan and Their Neighbours", in *Traditional Cures*, 71. See Adda Bruemmer Bozeman, *Conflict in Africa*, Princeton: University Press, 1976, 161.

²¹⁹ Bozeman, 251.

²²⁰ Guy Olivier Faure, "Traditional Conflict Management in Africa and China", *Traditional Cures*, 160.

²²¹ Faure, 159. See also Wendy Wilson-Fall, "Conflict Prevention and Resolution Among the Fulbe", *Traditional Cures*, 54.

²²² Ibid., 55. For instance, there is a jocular relationship between the Birom and the Sokoto Fulani (Buzaye) which increases cordiality. Interview with Patrick Kevin, Jos, 10/1/07.

The above shows that the techniques of handling conflict in Africa are strikingly similar from one place to another.²²⁵ Although Zartman attempted to categorize the approaches as mediation, arbitration and negotiation,²²⁶ the fact is that in Africa, there are no clear lines of demarcating the various traditional approaches to conflict handling. Bozeman noted: "...unlike the West, where adjudication has connotations not shared by arbitration or mediation, these processes are often intertwined in Africa."²²⁷

We note that the traditional approaches are ways which could help in handling religious conflicts in Nigeria, but they suffer several limitations. First, both Christianity and Islam appear to disregard some of the traditional institutions of conflict handling. Second, the frequency and sophistication of current religious conflict in Nigeria have burgeoned beyond the scope of traditional methods alone. Third, the continuous changing face of the traditional society by the influence of modernity has weakened some of the traditional structures which facilitated effective conflict handling.

Government Approaches to Conflict Management

In Nigeria, governments at the local, state and federal levels have always been involved in non-violent conflict management. According to Zartman, "Governance is conflict management."²²⁸ Therefore, the way in which people are organized and resources are allocated are all important aspects of managing conflict. For example, Osaghae viewed President Obasanjo's implementation of the 1979 constitution by appointing one federal minister from each of the 36 states of the country as proactive

²²³ Ibid., 52. Asha Hagi Elmi, Ibrahim Dekha and Janice Jenner, in their article, "Women's Role in Peacemaking in Somali Society" in *Rethinking Pastoralism in Africa* ed. Dorothy L. Hodgson (Oxford: James Currey, 2000), 121 -123.

²²⁴ Koussi, 67.

²²⁵ Eghosa Osaghae, , "Applying Traditional Methods to Modern Conflict: Possibilities and Limits" in *Modern Conflicts* ed. I. William Zartman, London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc, 2000 "Applying Traditional Methods ", 205.

²²⁶ I. William Zartman, "Conclusion", *Traditional Cures*, 224.

²²⁷ Bozeman., 259.

²²⁸ I. William Zartman, "Introduction," in *Governance as Conflict Management*, ed. I. William Zartman (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 1997), 1.

conflict management.²²⁹ Also, Reno applauded the Kaduna State governor's 'limited' application of the Sharia to Muslim communities after the Sharia riots of 2000. His exemption of some traditional chiefs from the authority of the Zaria Emirate Council in favour of direct connection with the State Government was interpreted by many Nigerians as a fair approach to conflict management.²³⁰

The involvement of the government in non-violent conflict management dates back to the colonial days chiefly through the development of the Constitutions and the establishment of the Legal Systems. According to Crowder, the 1947 Richards Constitution was for the purpose of promoting the unity of Nigeria.²³¹ Other Constitutions came in 1952, 1960, 1963, 1979, 1989²³² and 1999, with the aim of ensuring the peaceful coexistence of all Nigerians. A report from the Colonial Office shows that a majority/minority problem was noticed in the three regions of the country before independence, which led to the formation of the Commission to Enquire into the Fears of the Minority on September 26, 1957.²³³ The work of the Commission in the three regions of Nigeria from November 23, 1957 to April 12, 1958, led to the inclusion of Fundamental Rights in the 1960 Constitution at independence.²³⁴ There was no such provision in the Constitution of Ghana, another British colony, at its independence in 1957.²³⁵ In other words, including the Bill of Rights in the Nigerian constitution was not because the British Empire did the same for every colony which was becoming a sovereign state, but as a means of proactively managing problems which might destabilize independent Nigeria.

²²⁹ Eghosa E. Osaghae, "Human Rights and Ethnic Conflict Management: The Case of Nigeria" *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 33, No. 2. (May, 1996), 181.

²³⁰ William Reno, "The Roots of Sectarian Violence and its cure", in ed. Robert I. Rotberg *Crafting the New Nigeria: Confronting Challenge* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc, 2004), 234.

²³¹ Michael Crowder, *The Story of Nigeria* (London: Faber and Faber, 1962), 273.

²³² Osaghae, "Human Rights", 181.

²³³ Colonial Office, Nigeria: Report of the Commission appointed to enquire into the fears of Minorities and the means of allaying them, Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for the Colonies by Command of Her Majesty, July 1958, London, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, p.1.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, 97.

²³⁵ Paul O. Proehl, *Fundamental Rights Under the Nigerian Constitution, 1960-1965* (Los Angeles: African Studies Centre, University of Los Angeles, 1970), 2-3.

The present Nigerian Constitution, which is a legacy of the 1960 Constitution, contains considerable measures to guard against various kinds of polemics, particularly religious conflict. Article 1, of No 38, in the fourth chapter on Fundamental Rights says:

Every person shall be entitled to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, including freedom to change religion or belief, and freedom (either alone or in community with others, and in public or private) to manifest and propagate his religion or belief in worship, teaching, practice and observance.²³⁶

Also, the section on 'Education Objectives' in the Constitution includes:

Government shall direct its policy towards ensuring that there are equal and adequate educational opportunities at all levels.²³⁷

This has been followed by the current Educational Policy of Nigeria which has five objectives enshrined to ensure a non-conflicting system as follows:

- a free and democratic society
- a just and egalitarian society
- a united, strong and self-reliant nation
- a great and dynamic economy
- a land of bright and full opportunity for all²³⁸

Thus, the philosophy from which the Nigerian ideology evolved takes cognizance of mutual virtues, common yearnings and aspirations, and the ethnic and religious plurality of the nation. These are all expected to assist in managing conflicts in Nigeria. However, Ekwunife has argued that "Nigeria is yet to produce leaders who will transcend their particular religious faith and convictions to implement constitutional laws without fear or favour,"²³⁹ indicating that the problem is not so much in the theory but the 'practice' of the Constitution.

Apart from the Constitution, the legal system has been another means the government has utilized in managing conflict, since the Colonial period. According to Julius Lewin, the Native Authority Ordinance recognized the native legal systems in place

²³⁶ 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 5th May 1999, 31.

²³⁷ Ibid., 18.

²³⁸ Anthony N.O. Ekwunife, *Politics and Religious Intolerance: The Nigerian Experience* (Enugu: Spiritan Publications, 1992), 23.

²³⁹ Ibid., 22.

prior to the advent of Colonial rule.²⁴⁰ In view of this, the *sharia* Islamic law which had been in use in parts of Northern Nigeria since the Dan Fodio jihad (1804-8) was allowed in the North, being limited to personal and civil laws; and Customary Courts were permitted in the South. Later on the Common Law system was introduced, which accommodated the Customary Law Court, the Magistrate Court, and the High Court in the South. The North operated the *sharia* through the Alkali court.²⁴¹ In a publication released by the Nigerian Office, London, the Colonial legal state of the country was summarized as follows:

There are two kinds of court with current jurisdiction, the Federal Supreme Court together with the regional High Courts; and the Native Courts [the Sharia and the Customary Courts]. The former have full right of trial of criminal and civil cases of all types throughout the country, but whenever possible, cases are left to the Native Courts. The Native Courts derive from traditional tribunals which, in one form or another, existed throughout the country [before colonization]...the Federal Supreme Court has taken over the appellate powers of the West African Court of Appeal and is also empowered to settle disputes between regional Governments and the Federation.²⁴²

The court has therefore continued to be a standing government approach to managing conflict in Nigeria, but it has been replete with its own limitations and inadequacies. Its greatest weakness in conflict management is that it does not handle matters of relationships. Cases settled in court therefore do not necessarily mean a restoration of relationships in the society.

The nature of conflicts in Nigeria has necessitated other non-violent government approaches than the Constitution and the Legal System. The most prominent is the 'Commission of Inquiry'. According to Banjo, "Such commissions are often mandated to determine the causes, courses and consequences of the crises. They are also charged to determine who ought to be punished and which victims deserve

²⁴⁰ Julius Lewin, "The Recognition of Native Law and Custom in British Africa", Extra Supplement to the *Journal of Royal African Society*, London, Macmillan & Co., Limited, Vol. XXXVII, 1938, 1.

²⁴¹ Fola T. Lateju and Rafiu I. Adebayo, "Two Decades of Violence: Christian-Muslim Encounter in Nigeria" Report of the Centre for Interfaith Relations and Cross-Cultural Outreach, Submitted to Life and Peace Institute, Sweden, 2007, 5.

²⁴² Nigerian Office, London, "Nigeria: An Outline", Cambridge, W. Heffer and Sons Ltd; n.d., 23; Published by the Nigerian Office, 41, Buckingham Palace Road, London.

restitution.²⁴³ Perhaps the most significant of them was the 1999 Human Rights Violations Investigation Commission (HRVIC) popularly known as the ‘Oputa Panel’, coined after the head of the Commission, retired Justice Chukwudifu Oputa. Modelled after South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Nigerian government sought to promote human rights and reconciliation after the country returned to civil rule. The main concern of the Commission was to interrogate past human rights violations, redress past injustices and find ways to prevent their recurrence.²⁴⁴ According to President Obasanjo, the purpose of the Commission was “to heal the wounds of the past ...”²⁴⁵ Unlike earlier panels of inquiry, this Commission was perceived to consist of Nigerians of tested integrity.²⁴⁶ Reports showed that over 10,000 petitions were received by the Commission and 40 were subject to public hearing as they entailed issues of gross human rights violation.

However, the painstaking effort of this Commission for over three years came to a shocking stalemate by a Supreme Court ruling in favour of former President, General I.B.B. Babangida and two of his security chiefs, General A.K. Togun and Brigadier General Halilu Akilu. They had contested their invitation to appear before the Panel in court, having been accused before the Panel by Chief Gani Fawehinmi of the murder in 1986 of Dele Giwa, a prominent Nigerian journalist.²⁴⁷ The Supreme Court ruled that the setting up of the Panel was unconstitutional. In view of this, the summary report of the Commission was not released to the Nigerian public.²⁴⁸ According to Yusuf, “the court chose to institute a narrow interpretation of the law, with dire consequences for the truth-seeking process in Nigeria...a missed

²⁴³ Adewole Segun Banjo, “Nigeria: An Overview of Multifaceted Conflict” in *Through Fire With Water: The Roots of Division and Potential for Reconciliation in Africa* eds. Erik Doxtader and Charles Villa-Vicencio (Asmara: African World Press, 2003), 100 – 101.

²⁴⁴ Banjo, 101.

²⁴⁵ Address by His Excellency, the President, Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo at the Inauguration Ceremony of the Human Rights Violations Investigations Panel, June 14, 1999.

²⁴⁶ Editorial, “Oputa Panel: Matters Arising”, *The Guardian*, Sunday, December 19, 2004. http://www.nigerianmuse.com/nigeriawatch/oputa/?u=Guardian_editorial_Oputa_panel_December04.htm, 21/11/07.

²⁴⁷ Synoptic Overview of HRVIC Report, 97.

²⁴⁸ Guardian Editorial, December 19, 2004. http://www.nigerianmuse.com/nigeriawatch/oputa/?u=Guardian_editorial_Oputa_panel_December04.htm, 21/11/07.

opportunity to establish the truth.”²⁴⁹ Also, Hassan Kukah, a member of the Panel, said:

Nothing stops the government from releasing the report to the Nigerian Public as a moral obligation. Releasing the report...would have helped to establish confidence that government is sincere about seeking a way out of the problems of Nigeria.²⁵⁰

The above provides background to Nigerians’ perception of Commissions of Inquiry²⁵¹ both at the state and federal levels.²⁵² While the efforts of the numerous Commissions of Inquiry cannot be thrown to the wind, at least four criticisms of this approach are clear. First, people perceive imbalance in the composition of most Commissions. Second, recommendations of most commissions never see the light of day. Third, although some forms of punishment have been meted towards perceived perpetrators of violence in Nigeria, it is believed that the main sponsors of violence are usually concealed from justice, especially in religious violence. Fourth, the tribunals or commissions have not curbed conflicts. Accordingly, Falola: “None of the tribunals and panels of inquiry of the 1980s brought an end to the religious crises. Throughout the decade, no one investigated the activities of the various governments, nor were religious leaders investigated.”²⁵³

Approaches of Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) To Conflict Handling

Apart from the various governments across the country who get caught up in non-violent conflict handling (management), numerous other stake holders are also involved in finding ways to navigate out of the impasses usually created by conflict. As such both national and international NGOs have been significantly involved in conflict intervention of one type or another in Nigeria. There are legions of NGOs in

²⁴⁹ Yusuf, “Travails”, 280 - 281.

²⁵⁰ Guardian Editorial, December 19, 2004.
http://www.nigerianmuse.com/nigeriawatch/oputa/?u=Guardian_editorial_Oputa_panel_December04.htm, 21/11/07.

²⁵¹ Ibid.

²⁵² See Stephen Kwande *et al*, *Plateau Crises: A Journalists’ Peace Initiative* (Jos: NUJ PPC Chapel, 2003), 88 and Plateau State Publication, *Plateau Resolves*, 35.

²⁵³ Toyin Falola, *Violence in Nigeria: The Crisis of Religious Politics and Secular Ideologies*, (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 1998), 192.

Nigeria, carrying out various kinds of functions. Their activities basically involve running workshops, seminars and conferences, for which they characteristically compete for foreign funding.²⁵⁴

Ityavyar et al have documented the work of the International Centre for Gender and Social Research (INTER-GENDER) with headquarters in Jos. This organization was formed following incessant bloody clashes between Christians and Muslims in Jos and Kaduna.²⁵⁵ The basic approach of Inter-Gender is by carrying out ‘advocacy visits’ to stake holders of conflict and holding advocacy seminars.²⁵⁶ Another NGO which was involved in conflict handling was a group of journalists of the Plateau Publishing Company (PPC). Their approach was to embark on a peace mission project through assessment/advocacy tour of Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Plateau State. This scheme was the first of its kind and aimed at preaching the virtues of peace and the dangers inherent in violence. It was highly commended for conflict handling.²⁵⁷

While these NGOs have been appreciably involved in both conflict management and resolution, their activity-span is usually stunted by lack of funds. Their critics accuse them of lacking initiatives and over-dependence on foreign aid. Consequently, they become instruments of their foreign mentors who dictate the boundaries of their operations, techniques and results.²⁵⁸

Interfaith Approaches to Conflict Handling

There is a sense in which faith-based approaches to conflict handling may be treated as NGOs because they are actually non-governmental and some of them are so

²⁵⁴ Nankin Bagudu, *Identity, Political Religiosity and Communal Violence in Nigeria: Implications*, League for Human Rights (Jos: Dales Press Ltd, 2003), 137-139.

²⁵⁵ Dennis Ityavyar, Alfred Tyohia and Zacharys Gundu, *Christian –Muslim Peace Dialogue in Jos and Kaduna* (Jos: Inter-Gender, 2006), vi.

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

²⁵⁷ Kwande *et al*, *Plateau Crises*, ix-x.

²⁵⁸ Bagudu, 139.

registered.²⁵⁹ However, we chose to treat the faith-based organizations differently from the earlier NGOs which are apparently more 'secular' in outlook. They have been involved in conflict intervention both at levels of management and resolution. Before a brief discussion on 'interfaith' conflict handling, it is important to consider what is going on in each religious tradition; in this case, Christianity and Islam.

Kukah and Falola have examined the complexity of conflict handling by Christians. It involves a wide range of categories which include individuals in the laity, the clergy, congregations, denominations and interdenominational organizations. For instance, in 1987, after the Kafanchan/Kaduna riots, Jolly Tanko, a Christian from central Nigeria and one-time Nigerian ambassador, demanded explanations from the government for excluding Christians from power in the country.²⁶⁰ Also, after the Zango Kataf riots of 1992 in Kaduna State, Rev Yusufu Turaki wrote his personal recommendation to the Kaduna State tribunal, insisting that some ethnic groups under the Zaria emirate should be granted autonomy and political recognition.²⁶¹ At the end of the tribunal, the state governor granted this request. The above are cases in which individuals contributed to the state's conflict management strategy.

On the denominational level, it is interesting to note the legacy of the Historic Peace Churches (HPC) in both management and resolution of conflict in Nigeria. Gwamna has explored the heritage of the Mennonites, Quakers and the Brethren as found in the Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN - The Church of the Brethren in Nigeria). Founded in 1923 by Stover Kulp and Albert Helser at Garkida, Adamawa State, the Church has over 1,000 branches in Nigeria and has continued to be involved in peace efforts around the country. With its non-retaliation motif and the message of love, the EYN Church has managed and resolved diverse crises especially among the various ethnic groups of central Nigeria.²⁶²

²⁵⁹ Duncan Maclaren, "Reconciliation: Linking Spirituality with Development", *Studies in World Christianity*, Vol. 9, 2, 2003, pp. 226-227. Maclaren categorizes NGOs into three, namely, the Dunantist, the Wilsonian, and the Religious tradition.

²⁶⁰ Matthew Hassan Kukah and Toyin Falola, *Religious Militancy and Self-Assertion* (Aldershot: Atheneum Press Ltd., 1996), 239.

²⁶¹ Jan H. Boer, *Christians: Why this Muslim Violence?* (Belleville: Essence Publishing, 2004), 287.

²⁶² Filibus Gwamna, "Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria", in *Seeking Peace in Africa* eds. Donald E. Miller, Scott Hollan, Lon Fendal and Dean Johnson (Geneva, Herald Press, 2007), 57.

Perhaps the Roman Catholic Church has the most developed denominational conflict management and resolution programmes under the Justice, Development and Peace/Caritas Committee (JDPC) of the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN). Their Think-Tank and Thematic Committees have generated expertise for the CSN in various areas of national life, including issues of justice.²⁶³ The Peace-building and Conflict Resolution Committee of the Think-Tank is responsible for researching, documenting and making recommendations on conflict issues for the ‘Catholic Bishops Conference’, “on strategies on conflict mitigation and transformation in Nigeria”.²⁶⁴ From that point the Catholic Bishops are able to issue press releases to the government and expedite further actions. Thus, as follow-up to the Maiduguri mayhem of February 18, 2006, a first step into conflict handling tagged ‘A Rapid Assessment’ was carried out by the Think-Tank Committee on Peace-building and Conflict Resolution to assist the victims.²⁶⁵

On the ecumenical level, both Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN)²⁶⁶ and CAN have been significantly involved with dealing with conflicts and only a brief mention of their methods can be made here. Their main strategy has been to serve as voice to the Christians when under attack; encouraging them to exercise restraint; providing relief materials for victims of religious riots; and warning the government against injustices and perceived favouritism for Islam in the country.²⁶⁷

In 2000, Kaduna State CAN called on Christians to go on a protest march against the adoption of *sharia* in the state and this led to a devastating crisis in the city.²⁶⁸ Despite these crises, CAN in the state continued to seek ways towards building good

²⁶³ JDP/Caritas Nigeria, <http://jdpcnational.or/thinktank.htm>

²⁶⁴ CSN, “The February 2006 Maiduguri Conflict: A Rapid Assessment by the Peace-building Committee of the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN)”, March 2006, pp.i-1 (Unpublished paper).

²⁶⁵ Ibid., 1.

²⁶⁶ The Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN) is made up of a group of ‘mission’ (Protestant) churches and they form one block out of the five blocks that make up the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN). Other blocks are the OAIC, TEKAN/ECWA, CPFN?PFN and the CSN.

²⁶⁷ Falola, *Violence*, 186. See <http://iona.sms.ed.ac.uk/home/s0459568/CatholicCatholicBishops.htm>

²⁶⁸ B.E.E. Debki, *The Tragedy of Sharia, Cry and the Voice of Masses: Kaduna Crisis from an Eye Witness*, (n.p and n.p, 2000), 116.

relationship with Muslims. Idowu Fearon, the Anglican Archbishop of Kaduna, has been deeply involved on an ecumenical level and inter-faith levels.²⁶⁹

In ways similar to the Christian approach, Muslims in Nigeria have also been involved in conflict handling, but with some variations. For instance, while Christian individuals and denominations have acted both independently and ecumenically in conflict situations, most Muslim approaches are 'ecumenical' in nature. As such their actions are more frequently under umbrella-organizations such as the NSCIA, JNI, JIBWIS (*Jama'atu Izalatil Bid'ah Wa Iqamati Sunnah*) and IZALA.²⁷⁰ It follows then that the individuals who usually call on Muslims to exercise restraint during conflicts are the leaders of such ecumenical bodies like the Sultan of Sokoto (President-General of the NSCIA and JNI), the northern Emirs, who are JNI leaders in their states and the General Secretary of the NCSIA. Hence after the *sharia* riots of Kaduna State in 2000, both the Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Muhammed Machido and the Emir of Zazzau, Alhaji Shehu Idris, called on Christians and Muslims in the state to exercise restraints and live together harmoniously.²⁷¹ This kind of accent from Muslim leaders often receives lesser attentiveness from Nigerians than the voice of perceived harbingers of discordant views or inflammatory speeches like Sheikh Abubakar Gumi who said in 1987, "if Christians do not accept Muslims as their leader, we have to divide the country... once you are a Muslim, you cannot accept to choose a non- Muslim to be your leader."²⁷² For a very long time, this show of zero tolerance left a lasting negative impact upon Nigerian Christians.²⁷³ Gumi's conflict handling approach was the win-lose approach. Given Nigeria's multi-religious features, Gumi's method is quite dangerous as it excludes the principle of compromise upon which a pluralistic nation must function.

²⁶⁹ Idowu Fearon, "Fostering Unity in a Fragmented Nation: The Role of Religion in Nigeria," *Chatham House: Independent Thinking on Religious Affairs*, Chatham House, Monday 19 March 2007, 3-4.

²⁷⁰ Deji Ayegboyin, "Religious Associations and Political Dispensation in Nigeria", *Studies in Interreligious Dialogue*, Leuven, Peters, 15, 1, 2005, 101 – 113.

²⁷¹ Jan H. Boer, *Nigeria's Decades of Blood* (Jos: Stream Christian Publishers, 2003), 123. See also, Bala Ade Dauke in *Zangon Kataf: A Journey of a People*, (Zaria: Mangut Publishers, 2004), 151.

²⁷² *This Week*, April, 1987. See also Kukah and Falola's *Religious Militancy*, 153.

²⁷³ Dogara Je'adayibe Gwamna, *The Turning Tides of Religious Intolerance in Nigeria: The External Connections*, 8. (Unpublished paper, n.d)

On the contrary, when the Maiduguri ‘cartoon’ riots occurred, the Secretary General of the NSCIA, Alhaji Lateef Adegbite, condemned the violence saying: “it is unIslamic to take innocent lives and destroy property. Non Muslims in Nigeria have nothing to do with this publication.”²⁷⁴ This response was definitely in the path of positive conflict handling. On the ‘denominational’ level, after the crisis of September 7, 2001, the Plateau State branch of JNI and JIBWIS were involved in conflict handling. Both organizations assisted in providing relief materials to victims of conflict and participated in most conflict resolution conferences and workshops organized by the state government.²⁷⁵

John Parden asserts that the first notable interfaith conflict management programme with wide publicity in Nigeria was the National Council for Religious Affairs (NCRA) set up in 1987 by President Babangida in the aftermath of dragging Nigeria into the OIC. The council, composed of 24 religious leaders (12 Muslims and 12 Christians) was to advise government on the implications of joining the OIC and to report to the Minister of Interior, Lt. Gen. John Shagaya.²⁷⁶ By the recommendation of this committee, the Advisory Commission on Religious Affairs (ACRA) was established, made up of Christian and Muslim religious leaders. Unfortunately this Commission was unable to function due to disagreements between its members.²⁷⁷

On September 29, 1999, President Obasanjo inaugurated the Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC) as an association to promote inter-religious harmony in the country. The Council was planned to ultimately operate at the federal, state and local government levels as an autonomous, non-governmental body. Members at the national level were to be 25 Christians appointed by CAN and 25 Muslims appointed by the NSCIA²⁷⁸ and the Council was to be co-chaired by the heads of CAN and

²⁷⁴ *This Day, The Sunday Newspaper*, February 26, 2006, 109.

²⁷⁵ Denis Ityavyar and Zacharys Gundu, *Stakeholders in Peace and Conflicts* (Jos: International Centre for Gender and Social Research, 2004), 22-23. See also *Advocacy for Peace in Kaduna and Plateau States, Nigeria* eds. Denis Ityavyar et al (Jos: International Centre for Gender and Social Research, 2004).

²⁷⁶ John Parden, “Islam and Democratic Federalism in Nigeria”, *Bulletin of Ecumenical Theology*, Enugu, The Ecumenical Association of Nigerian Theologians, Vol. 14, 2002, 15.

²⁷⁷ Gboyega, 192.

²⁷⁸ NIREC, *Constitution of the Nigeria Inter-Religious Council*, 1-3.

NSCIA. Part of the function of the Council is conflict resolution through its 'Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Committee'.²⁷⁹ NIREC therefore stands today as the most widely recognized ongoing inter-faith programme for religious conflict intervention in Nigeria. However, NIREC has not produced any widely read or known publications/findings which may enhance peace building programmes in the country. Probably that was why John Achimugu, its Director of Legal Services, called for the production of periodic journals/bulletins which should be circulated particularly to higher institutions.²⁸⁰ Also, in some states of the country, NIREC has not made any significant impact. Although it is true that there are more religious conflicts in certain parts of the nation than others, the establishment of NIREC envisioned all states.²⁸¹ Some people have argued that NIREC is an elitist organization without grassroots effect.²⁸² Others have complained about various other handicaps of NIREC, including funding.²⁸³

Despite several weaknesses of NIREC, there appears to be a ray of hope through its national leadership, namely, the President General of the NSCIA, Sultan Mohammad Sa'ad Abubakar and the President of CAN, Archbishop John Onaiyekan. In an address at the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), Abubakar informed his audience of his response to CAN leaders who went to congratulate him upon his appointment as Sultan as follows:

I assured the Christian leaders of my willingness and determination to explore all avenues of strengthening the foundations of peace and religious harmony in Nigeria and expressed my readiness to work closely with the leadership of CAN to realise this goal.²⁸⁴

This speech increases hope in the peace building programmes expected from NIREC. Also, at the end of the same address, Abubakar told his listeners:

²⁷⁹ Ibid., 13.

²⁸⁰ "Nigeria: Religious Leaders Seek More Roles for NIREC, *Vanguard*, <http://allafrica.com/stories/200710190867.html>, posted 19 October, 2007.

²⁸¹ <http://www.africaaction.org/docs00/nig003.htm>, Nigeria: Obasanjo on Sharia Crisis, March 1, 2000.

²⁸² B. Aisha Lemu, "A Holistic Approach to Teaching Islam to Children: A Case Study in Northern Nigeria", <http://www.iarf.net/REDBOOKlet/Nigeria.htm>

²⁸³ Fearon, "Fostering unity in a Fragmented Nation", 3.

²⁸⁴ Abubakar, "Muslim-Christian Relations", 88.

Finally, I wish to... assure you all of the determination of the religious leadership in Nigeria to make Muslim-Christian conflict a thing of the past...there is hope, the hope of greater understanding and cooperation, and the promise of establishing a healthy foundation for Muslim-Christian relations in Nigeria.²⁸⁵

Similarly, Archbishop John Onaiyekan challenged Christian and Muslim leaders to speak out in the event of religious conflict in their areas. *Daily Trust* cites him as saying: “Leaders of Islam and Christianity should stand up and be heard to condemn violent acts and not keep quiet to make it look as if they approve of such crises.”²⁸⁶ He also criticized government’s attitude of impunity in the face of gruesome violence as follows:

If the law is evoked and implemented consistently, a lot of things will not happen. The problem is that when it [violence] happens, it is covered under religion. If I’m involved in killing, nobody should defend me, not even the Pope. I should be left to face the law.²⁸⁷

From the foregoing, the outlook of NIREC demonstrates a hopeful future for Nigeria. The task of this thesis is to strengthen that hope through a reassuring theological basis and the involvement of the Church.

The Imam and the Pastor: A Faith-Based Initiative

The unique story of the co-founders of the Kaduna-based Muslim-Christian Dialogue Forum (MCDF) and the Inter-faith Mediation Centre (IMC) is probably an integral aspect of the global acceptance of their conflict handling approach. Both Pastor James Wuye and Imam Mohammed Ashafa were leaders of opposing militia groups in Kaduna, prior to their convergence; one Christian (supported by Youth CAN) and the other Muslim (supported by the National Council of Muslim Youth Organizations – NACOMYO, a subsidiary of JNI); and each deeply rooted in hatred of the other.²⁸⁸ The two men had lived as bitter rivals prior to encountering significant losses in the religious crisis of Tudun Wada, Kaduna, which followed the 1992 Zango-Kataf riots. While James lost one of his hands, Ashafa lost his beloved

²⁸⁵ Ibid., 88.

²⁸⁶ “Nigeria: Onaiyekan Asks Religious Leaders to Condemn Sectarian Violence”, *Daily Trust*, Abuja, October 23, 2007, <http://allafrica.com/stories/200710230172.html>, posted October 23, 2007.

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

²⁸⁸ Katharina P. Coleman, “Warriors and Brothers: Imam Muhammad Ashafa and Pastor James Wuye, Nigeria” in *Peacemakers in Action: Profiles of Religion in Conflict Resolution* ed. David Little (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 259 – 260.

Islamic teacher and two brothers.²⁸⁹ Based on reflections on the teachings of their faiths as recorded in the Bible and Qur'an, both men eschewed revenge, embraced forgiveness, experienced transformation, and began advocating reconciliation and peaceful coexistence. Their personal experiences of transformation and testimonies have been basic to the uniqueness and effectiveness of their approach.²⁹⁰

In 1995, Ashafa and James co-founded the MCDF and the organization grew in capacity to be a grassroots, non-governmental and inter-religious set-up; consisting of staff of an equal number of Muslims and Christians and coordinated by Ashafa and James.²⁹¹ Their efforts have shown significant success and they have continued to be involved in various conflict intervention programmes across the country and beyond.²⁹² Probably their most significant achievements were the Kaduna Peace Declaration (KPD)²⁹³ programme and the Peace Affirmation Ceremony of Yelwa-Shendam.²⁹⁴ According to Rosalind Hackett:

I was particularly impressed by a very humble, yet clearly effective, organization, the Muslim-Christian Youth Dialogue Forum, founded by a local Muslim and a Christian evangelist to combat ignorance and intolerance among the youth in Kaduna...The two somehow came together and decided that it was better to make peace and not war.²⁹⁵

Put differently, Coleman said of these two peace activists: "For the 'Pastor and the Imam', religion was once an excuse for violence. Today, as brothers, religion is their answer to peace."²⁹⁶ This model has a great promise for advancing peace in Nigeria.

²⁸⁹ Ibid., 261.

²⁹⁰ James Wuye and Muhammed Ashafa, "The Pastor and the Imam: The Muslim-Christian Dialogue Forum in Nigeria", <http://www.peoplebuildingpeace.org/thestories/article.php?theme&id=93&pid=21>, 2/5/2007.

²⁹¹ Coleman, 264.

²⁹² Ibid.

²⁹³ The Imam and the Pastor: A Documentary Film, Producer and Director Alan Channer, London: Initiatives of Change, 2006. WWW.FLTFILMS.ORG.UK

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

²⁹⁵ Rosalind I. J. Hackett, "Religious Freedom and Religious Conflict in Africa" in *Religion on the International News Agenda* ed. Mark Silk (Hartford: The Leonard E. Greenberg Center For The Study of Religion In Public Life, 2000), 112-113.

²⁹⁶ Coleman, 273.

Conclusion

I set out in this chapter to consider various discourses on conflict in three parts. The first part was concerned with the general history of conflict studies covering several decades and the second part explored the various theories which try to explain conflict. These include the inherency, the contingency and the hybrid theories. In the third section, I explored various methods of conflict handling in Nigeria either as violent or non-violent and it is my view that something more must be done in addition to current endeavours. And that exactly is the goal of this thesis, namely, to suggest a theological approach to conflict transformation which will complement current efforts. This appears to be the option that world leaders are compelled to choose in the current face of religious extremism around the globe. *Metro* cites Tony Blair thus: “We have been reminded in the acts of terror committed in the name of faith, that we ignore the power of religion at our peril”.²⁹⁷ As such the task of this thesis is to seek a theological input towards religious conflict transformation in Nigeria. The methodology for carrying out such an undertaking is the vital task of the next chapter.

²⁹⁷ *Metro*, Friday, April 4, 2008.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGIES AND METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

This chapter focuses on ‘methodologies’ and ‘methods’ from the perspectives of Swinton and Mowat. ‘Method’ in this thesis will refer to specific techniques used for collecting and analysing data. ‘Methodology’, on the other hand will mean “an overall approach to a particular field”.²⁹⁸ That means each of the methodologies used in this thesis is “a family of methods that have in common particular philosophical and epistemological assumptions”.²⁹⁹ Methods therefore refer to techniques within particular sets of methodological assumptions.

The nature of religious conflict in Nigeria is notably complex as it is shaped by historical, economic, political, sociological and anthropological factors, giving it an interdisciplinary outlook. And because this research is basically towards a theological approach to conflict transformation, a variety of methods have been employed for its analytical task and two basic methodologies were applied. First, the qualitative socio- scientific methodology was used to explore the events of religious conflict in Nigeria and the possibilities for conflict transformation. Second, a theological methodology of practical theology was adopted, which combined elements of ‘contextual’ and ‘comparative’ theologies. By this ‘poly-methodological’³⁰⁰ approach, there was a correlation of empirical and normative insights. Our research methods also involved the investigation of extant literature: books, journals, government papers, pamphlets, newspaper reports, internet sources, films, un-published materials, dissertations and theses.

²⁹⁸ John Swinton and Harriet Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research* (London: SMS Press, 2006), 75.

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

³⁰⁰ Frans Wijsen, *Seeds of Conflict in a Haven of Peace: from Religious Studies to Interreligious Studies in Africa*, Amsterdam: Radopi, 2007. Wijsen uses the term ‘poly-methodological’ “because the boundaries between traditional academic disciplines have become less rigid”, 53.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research utilized the qualitative research methodology. Primary data were obtained through face-to-face communication with participants through individual interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). The qualitative interview encourages interactions between the interviewer and the interviewee through a flexible agenda. It aims at going beneath the surface of the topic under discussion, exploring what people are saying in some details and unravelling new ideas which were not anticipated at the outset of the exploration.³⁰¹ In exploration, one does not know all what one would meet.

A number of factors led to the choice of the qualitative research methodology as the approach for investigation and analysis. One, the exploratory nature of the investigation called for theorizing with the participants' point of view; from their particular settings. Scholars refer to this as "adopting the social actors' point of view".³⁰² Since the thesis does not adopt a theory in advance, which would have called for theory testing through the quantitative method, the qualitative method of research was considered more appropriate for generating explanations on the religious conflicts. This does not mean that there were no initial ideas in mind to guide the research, as explained in the statement of the problem, but that there was no predetermination of the issues of conflict which were being investigated.

Two, because the topic of investigation centred on the issue of religious conflict, I reasoned that detailed narration and description of events would be necessary. As such, the qualitative methodology was preferred since issues of conflict usually generate massive verbal communications. Even in sibling conflict within families, verbal communications are very crucial in determining causes, courses and consequences of conflict. In order therefore to draw maximum information and to gain an in-depth insight into the topic, the qualitative method was inevitable.

Three, I was convinced about the rationality of relying on information gathered from a small number of informants whom I perceived to be very knowledgeable on the matters of the religious conflicts which occurred in Jos and Maiduguri. Usually,

³⁰¹ Nicky Britten, "Qualitative Interviews in Medical Research" in eds. Nicholas Mays and Catherine Pope *Qualitative Research in Health Care* (London: BMJ Publishing Group, 1996), 30.

³⁰² Norman Blaike, *Designing Social Research*, (Cambridge, Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2000), 253.

interviews are justified when contacts are made with key players who can give privileged information on the topic of research.³⁰³ Thus, since I had confidence in the possibility of gaining access to these key informants, I viewed the method of qualitative studies as significant and reliable. The key informants were not just people at the top level of the society, they included people among the ‘rank-and-file’ in order to have a balanced view of the conflicts. Four, because investigating religious conflict delves into the domain of emotions, feelings and sometimes, personal experiences; I considered it most adequate to utilize the qualitative method. My reasoning was that religious conflict, being a sensitive issue, needed careful handling, which could be achieved mainly through empathetic communication with key informants. Sensitive matters which cover the areas of emotions, experience and feelings need careful handling since they are not straightforward factual matters which are better handled by quantitative methods.³⁰⁴

Lastly, the choice of the qualitative method was also due to the limited resources of time and money at my disposal. In the course of this research, investigation covered two cities in two states of Nigeria which are widely apart, within a total period of five and a half months. Making proper arrangements for meeting with a small number of people was most suitable.

The Semi-structured Interview

This research was carried out using semi-structured interviews. As such there were a list of issues to be addressed and questions to be answered. Usually, semi-structured interviews are conducted “on the basis of a loose structure consisting of open-ended questions that define the area to be explored, at least, initially, and from which the interviewer or the interviewee may diverge in order to pursue an idea in more detail”.³⁰⁵ In other words, although semi-structured interviews are characterized by petite structure, they also maintain significant flexibility. Therefore, the interviewees had the opportunity to elaborate on areas of their greater ideas and interests.

³⁰³ Martyn Denscombe, *The Good Research Guide*, 2nd ed., (Maidenhead, Open University Press, 2006), 165.

³⁰⁴ Ibid.

³⁰⁵ Britten, “Qualitative Interviews”, 29.

The seven open-ended questions which I prepared were uniformly presented to each of the participants and the FGDs. After asking each question, I listened supportively to what the interviewees had to say and when s/he finished responding, I asked the next question, and so on. The seven questions remained the same throughout the series of interviews. Scholars opine that when interviews are so structured, they assume that “the researcher knows the general meaning of the experience and is looking for insights into each of its facets.”³⁰⁶ Of course I have carefully observed the issues of religious conflict in Nigeria since the Maitastine riots of 1980. However, there was also flexibility in the ordering of the questions. When an informant spoke into the range of another question, he/she was allowed to go on so that the flow of thought would not be distorted and the best could be achieved in data collection. The informants were allowed to develop ideas and speak widely on the issues which were raised. According to Denscombe, semi-structured interviews allow respondents to develop their own thoughts, use their own words, aim to ‘discover’ rather than ‘check’, and lend themselves to in-depth investigation.³⁰⁷ The advantage of this is that informed actors and stakeholders in the various conflicts were able to share their lived experiences without being gagged by the restrictions that characterize structured interviews.

As mentioned above, the semi-structured interviews were conducted on both one-to-one and FGD levels. The one-to-one interviews were easier to manage and they made it possible to locate specific ideas coming from specific individuals. Altogether, twenty individual interviews were conducted in the two cities, ten from Jos and ten from Maiduguri. Also, one FGD was conducted in each city so that I could explore how the respondents talked about these conflicts. Stewart and Shamdasani have called attention to Krippendorff’s *emic* and *etic* types of data, in their explanation of the FGD. Accordingly, *emic* data are generated from their indigenous settings with very little imposition from the researcher. However, *etic* data contain the researcher’s imposed views on the situation. While Stewart and

³⁰⁶ Larry VandeCreek, Hilary Bender and Merle R. Jordan, *Research in Pastoral Care and Counseling: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches*, n.p., *Journal of Pastoral Care Publications*, 1994, p.101.

³⁰⁷ Denscombe, 167.

Shamdasani agreed that it is impossible to be fully either of the two, they also held that one type of data would have more tendencies towards either *emic* or *etic* data types. They argue that the FGD is among the data gathering techniques which have greater *emic* tendencies because individuals respond in their own words and ways to situations.³⁰⁸ The FGD therefore gives room for respondents to present matters in accordance with their lived experience and in the way they see things. And because the people selected for the FGDs were not religious leaders but the grassroots ‘common’ people, I sought to compare their views with that of the individual interviewees in order to see how agreeable they were with the ‘official’ positions.

In Jos, there were seven people in the FGD while in Maiduguri, there were eight people, making a total of fifteen people in the two FGDs.³⁰⁹ During the FGD interviews, questions were not thrown at individuals to answer in turns. Rather questions were generally asked and individuals were left to speak freely. My task was to promote interaction and to ensure that the groups remained focused. I also ensured that the voices of those who appeared to be sidelined by dominant voices were heard. Part of the advantage of using the FGDs was that they revealed both areas of consensus and disagreements among group members. They therefore helped me to discover the collective views of the interviewees as opposed to information coming from an individual. Since FGDs can be composed of different mixes of individuals,³¹⁰ the FGDs in both cities were a mixture of men and women, Muslims and Christians, and young and old persons. More will be said below on how the number of respondents was determined.

Without using any strict order, the following 7 questions were asked both at the individual and the FGD levels, interposed with probes and prompts:

- What was the cause of the conflict in your location?
- In what ways did the conflict manifest?

³⁰⁸ David W. Stewart and Prem N. Shamdasani, “Focus Group Research: Exploration and Discovery” in *Handbook of Applied Social Research Methods* eds. Leonard Bickman and Debra J. Rog (London: Sage Publications, 1998), 507.

³⁰⁹ See “Sampling” below.

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 512.

- How did the conflict stop?
- What were some consequences of the conflict?
- What, if done, could have hindered or mitigated the conflict?
- What does your religion teach about living with people of other faiths?
- What should be done to prevent future occurrence?

Observation³¹¹

In addition to interviews, the investigation involved observation through visits to several sites where the religious conflicts took place, and to which my informants made reference. Wreckages of the infernos could still be seen all over the towns even though, like in Jos, it had been six years since the conflict occurred. For instance, the destroyed Ultra Modern Market and the physical resettling of affected people along religious divides were visible in Jos. In the course of my interviews in Angwan-Rogo, I was shown empty houses which used to belong to Christians. Also, in Katako, I observed the wreckages of several homes which used to belong to Muslims. In Maiduguri, I visited the St. Theresa's Catholic Church in Bulunkutu where Fr. Michael Kajere was killed. Thus the observations helped to enrich the information collected and increased my insight on the conflicts.

Research Design

The research design adopted for this study is the “comparative design” or, as called elsewhere, the ‘multiple case study’. The design embodies “the logic of comparison in that it implies that we can understand social phenomena better when they are compared in relation to two or more meaningfully contrasting cases or situations”.³¹² Comparative design aims to gain deeper understanding of social realities and seeks explanations for the similarities and differences in such social realities in different social contexts. These aspirations of the comparative design may be realized either through quantitative or qualitative research. When a comparative design utilizes the

³¹¹ See appendix for various images.

³¹² Alan Bryman, *Social Research Methods*, Second ed., (Oxford: University Press, 2004), 53-55.

qualitative research strategy, as it is the case in this research, it takes the form of multiple case study. It has been argued that the strength of this kind of design is that it helps to build emerging theories through contrasting findings.³¹³

In the present study, two cases of religious conflict which occurred in Jos and Maiduguri, both in Northern Nigeria, were studied. The conflicts afforded the opportunity for comparisons to be made and they featured both similarities and differences. These cases have become the basis for exploring the possibilities of conflict transformation in Nigeria.

Research Sampling

Sampling is the aggregate portion of the population which is selected for investigation and the population is “the universe of units from which the sample is to be selected”³¹⁴. It is done when the population of the research interest is too large to study and this is usually caused by limitations in the areas of time, resources and personnel available to conduct large-scale research.³¹⁵ In this research, it could never have been possible to investigate all the people in Jos and Maiduguri on the events of conflicts which took place in their communities. Since it is the practice in research to choose samples from larger populations based on various strategies,³¹⁶ a small group was selected from the population to provide relevant information for the study. And although a group that accurately represents the population is not the goal in qualitative design, certain major factors guided the selection of the informants to ensure breadth of perspectives.

This research adopted the ‘purposive sampling’ approach, which is one of the non-probability sampling methods. It was not possible to use probability sampling or any sampling frame in which every member or all categories of members in the population could be represented.³¹⁷ The difficulty with such an approach is enormous

³¹³ Ibid., 55.

³¹⁴ Ibid., 87.

³¹⁵ Stephen L. Schensul, Jean J. Scensul and Margaret D. LeCompt, *Essential Ethnographic Methods: Observations, Interviews and Questionnaires*, (London: Alta Mira Press, 1999), 232.

³¹⁶ Ibid.

³¹⁷ Bryman, 87.

as there are no demographic data in these areas to determine the population from which sampling is drawn. Also, such techniques are hardly required for qualitative research “whereby researchers generate and test theory from the analysis of their data...rather than using data to test out or falsify a pre-existing theory.”³¹⁸ According to Denscombe, the question for the researcher to ask himself while using the purposive sampling approach is: “Given what I already know about the research topic and about the range of people or events being studied, who and what are likely to provide the best information?”³¹⁹ In the same vein, I wrestled with similar questions in this research and it became clear that I needed to concentrate on persons who displayed a wide variety of perspectives to illuminate the issue of religious conflict in the two cities. It is said that this sampling style is not merely economical, but far more informative than the conventional probability sampling.³²⁰ In fact Mason has called this sampling style ‘strategic sampling’ and argues that information received from one context can provide explanations for understanding other contexts.³²¹

Thus, following the procedure of purposive sampling, interviewees were selected to include traditional rulers, religious leaders, Christian and Muslim adherents, civil servants, artisans, women and persons of the dominant ethnic groups of the conflict regions. It was reasoned that these people, by their special positions and insights on the religious conflicts in their locations, were adequate sources of data for the research. For example, using Maiduguri as an instance, one of those sampled was the Shehu of Borno, Alhaji Dr Mustapha Umar El-Kanemi. He is the traditional and Islamic religious leader of Maiduguri town and the rest of Borno State. He is also the state chairman of the JNl, Borno State and the national vice chairman of JNl in Nigeria. By tradition, he is the main spokesman of the people, therefore, it was my view that he could speak reliably on the conflict in his community. Another person sampled in Maiduguri was the Chairman of CAN, the Rev. Joshua Ruwa Adamu. By his position, he is the head of the Christian community in Maiduguri. The two

³¹⁸ Mason, 138.

³¹⁹ Denscombe, 15.

³²⁰ Ibid.

personalities mentioned above were immediate stakeholders during the crisis between Muslims and Christians in that community. Similar explanations go for the choices of the other respondents in Jos. As for the FGDs, since I intended to examine people who were not religious leaders, it was possible to arrange meetings with selected informants of that category. A member of the Jos FGD was Safia Adamu of Tudun Wada, a sixty-five year old woman who was a prominent voice in her group.

The question of sample size is not straightforward and standards are not fixed. Like many other research matters, it is dependent on a number of factors such as time, money and nature of research questions. It is usually advised that the sample size should be satisfactory and small, in keeping with the nature of qualitative research.³²² Since in the qualitative research, actual sample size may not be known at the beginning, the sample size of this research kept changing as the research progressed. Initially, I purposed to sample seven persons in each of the two cities for individual interviews, with the hope of having a total of 14 interviewees in all. I also intended that attempt would be made to ensure a balance in the number of men, women, Christians, Muslims and 'neutral' (neither Christian nor Muslim) respondents. However, sampling assumed the 'snowball' technique and the number initially purposed became increased. Some of the people interviewed asked that some others, who were not part of my initial plan, should be interviewed. It turned out to be quite rewarding to have done so. According to Descombe, qualitative sampling may

follow a path of discovery in which the sample emerges as a sequence of decisions based on the outcomes of earlier stages of the research...Almost like a detective, the researcher follows a trail of clues. As each clue is followed up it points the researcher in a particular direction and throws up new questions that need to be answered...Ultimately, though, the researcher should pursue his investigation until the questions have been answered and things can be explained.³²³

Therefore, the target of 14 respondents for the research changed as the research progressed. By the time I felt that the questions had been sufficiently answered and that relevant data for meaningful explanations and comparisons on the subject had been gathered, a total of 35 persons had been interviewed in Jos and Maiduguri. In

³²¹ Jennifer Mason, *Qualitative Researching*, 2nd Ed., (London, Sage Publications, 2006), 123-124.

³²² Ibid.. 134.

³²³ Denscombe, 25. See Mason, 138.

Jos, 10 individual interviews were conducted and one FGD comprising 7 people was held, making a total of 17 persons. In Maiduguri, another 10 individual interviews were conducted and one FGD comprising of 8 persons, was held. Therefore, altogether, thirty-five persons were interviewed using the semi-structured approach on both the one-to-one and Focus Group Discussion levels. Details of how the interviewees were reached are tied to the issues of informants' consent below.

Informants' Consent

Since it is part of research ethics and good planning for the consent of interviewees to be sought, I ensured that careful steps were taken for advance notice to reach them. There were two main ways through which consent was gained. First, based on previous knowledge on the issues of religious conflict in Northern Nigeria, I mailed introductory letters to most of the selected informants in advance. Some letters were hand-delivered by my contact persons. For instance, Mr Felix Ikumapayi, a close contact of mine who was residing in Maiduguri and Mr. Joseph Yakubu, the Director of the Centre for Peace Advancement in Nigeria (CEPAN), Jos, assisted in delivering the letters to seek appointment with the Shehu of Borno and other religious leaders there. In Jos, Mr. Ezekiel Daluk and Mallam Yahuza served my letters to key informants. In addition to my letters, the university (of Edinburgh) office also gave me a letter of introduction on the research, which accompanied every letter to seek audience.

Second, I made some initial visits to some of the respondents. Having served as a local Church minister for over 20 years in Nigeria, holding both denominational and interdenominational ministerial positions, contact with religious leaders and traditional rulers in the areas of research was without much stress. As at the time of the field work, I was the immediate past General Secretary of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) in the Federal Capital Territory and the incumbent Vice Chairman of the North Central Zone of CAN in the country. The activities of this organization had ushered me into a lot of inter-religious programmes in the past, which enhanced contacts across religious groups. In addition, my fluency in the

Hausa³²⁴ language, which is the main means of communication in the areas studied, made it possible both to gain access to the informants and to communicate without the need for an interpreter. While it is arguable that some of these attributes would pose challenges to the issue of the 'self' in the research processes, suffice it to say that they were greatly instrumental for the overall success of the research. The interviewees were made to know that interviews granted would be used for the purpose of research and made available to the public.

Generally, the request for individuals to grant interviews was easier honoured than the FGDs. In the one-to-one interviews, I interviewed five Muslims and five Christians in each town. As for the FGDs, the idea to interview a group in each town draws from Lederach's concept of conflict transformation. I have already mentioned that Lederach viewed leadership in the society from the top, middle and grassroots levels. Because most of my individual informants could be categorized between the top and middle range levels of leadership only, I felt the need to maintain a balance by hearing views from 'below'. Therefore, I contacted fourteen people in each town to attend the FGDs³²⁵ and their responses were as anticipated. In Jos, seven people showed up among whom were two women and five men. Of the seven, four were Christians and three were Muslims. In Maiduguri, eight people responded to the FGD invitation. Three of them were men and five were women. Also, of these eight persons, four were Christians and four were Muslims.

In summation, 20 individuals (57%) were interviewed on one-to-one basis while 15 people (43%) were interviewed in (two) face-to-face FGDs, giving a total of 35 persons. Altogether, there were 24 men (69%) and 11 women (31%). The total number of Christians was 18 (51%) and of Muslims was 17 (49%).

The gender imbalance in the interviewees was anticipated and it can be briefly explained. First, in conflict situations, particularly in religious conflicts, women have largely been known to be at the background. Religious conflicts in Nigeria have therefore been mainly a domain of men. This explains why there are many widows in

³²⁴ I was comfortable speaking both English and Hausa languages, having served as a teacher of Hausa language in the past.

³²⁵ Experts suggest having between six and nine people in FGDs. See Descombe, 169.

the conflict zones. Women interviewed expressed their multiple predicaments in the face of the violent religious conflicts. This was well summarized by a woman in the Jos FGD who said; “In all these conflicts we the women are the worst hit. We have lost our husbands and we have lost our sons”³²⁶. It is therefore not surprising that the majority of respondents targeted in this research were men. And yet, the few women who spoke actually presented the female dimension with great passion like the widow quoted above.

Second, the uneven representation of the women respondents was caused by their unwillingness to remember those periods of trauma in their lives. Some women whom I contacted simply refused to grant interviews on the conflicts because they claimed they were yet to recover from the trauma of the events. Third, there were women who felt they had nothing to say since men had responded to my questions. This of course may be explained as part of the patriarchal setting in the North. Lastly, the smallness of the women respondents has to do with the Islamic culture which prohibits men’s direct contact with Muslim women. Being a male researcher, there was a limit to which I could go in the Islamic community. However, in spite of these constraints, advance arrangements and good relationships with influential people assisted in securing the female responses in the study.³²⁷

Interview Procedure

I ensured that a number of issues were settled before each interview took place. A tape recorder which had back-up batteries was always ready to record the interviews. Each interview began with greetings, which is customary of the Nigerian setting. Next, I introduced myself as a student researching on the conflict which involved Muslims and Christians in the area. Other issues which came up included reaffirming their permission to put the interview on tape; taking notes of what was said and reassuring the interviewees about confidentiality and anonymity regarding comments made during the interview. It is noteworthy to say that on this issue, most of my respondents disagreed with me. They insisted on their names being written and made

³²⁶ Interview with FGD, Jos, 13/2/07.

³²⁷ See interview list in the bibliography.

public because they claimed, in most cases, that they were speaking the truth, of which they were not afraid of anyone in the world knowing about. Also, most respondents indicated that they needed their names to be included in the 'report' because they perceived the project as a quest for peace, with which they should identify. In fact in a few cases, respondents told me that they would not grant me interviews if they would come under pseudonyms or anonymity in my research. This was of remarkable surprise to me because I viewed the research topic as a sensitive one and much emphasis was laid in my readings on anonymity. However, scholars also accept the use of real names in research where the explicit permission to reveal participants' personal identities have been obtained.³²⁸ Therefore, all names mentioned in this research are by the express authorization of the interviewees and in each case; there was the assurance of trust and rapport.

Most one-to-one interviews lasted between one and one and a half hours and the two FGDs lasted for one and a half hours each. The meetings held at different venues, depending on the preference of the interviewees including Church buildings, Mosques, palace, homes of people and offices.³²⁹ In all the cases, it was my responsibility to reach the interviewees at their convenience.

Analysis of Data

In qualitative researching, analysis has been described as "a process of breaking down the data and thematizing it in ways which draw out meanings hidden within the text"³³⁰. Also, "unlike quantitative data analysis, clear-cut rules about qualitative data analysis have not been developed."³³¹ Kvale said: "No standard method exists, no *via regia*, to arrive at essential meanings and deeper implications of what is said in an interview".³³² However, there are certain widely established conventions to qualitative data analysis just as there are in qualitative data collection. Kvale

³²⁸ Descombe, 189.

³²⁹ See appendix for some of the places where meetings were held, particularly Churches, Mosques and palaces.

³³⁰ Swinton and Mowat, 57.

³³¹ Bryman, 398.

³³² Steinar Kvale, *Doing Interviews*, (London: Sage, 2007), 103

mentions at least eight different modes of analysing qualitative research, namely, Meaning Coding, Meaning Condensation, Meaning Interpretation, Linguistic Analysis, Conversational Analysis, Narrative Analysis, Discursive Analysis and Deconstruction.³³³ In all these modes, qualitative research aims to transform information about the social world being investigated from records into data through written words, as opposed to the quantitative research which is preoccupied with numbers. In order to ensure that errors were minimized, the analysis was carried out in stages.

Thoughts on the analysis of the data began in earnest for me as soon as the research began. As the interviews were being conducted, I ensured that all notes taken in abridged forms were properly written in my notebook after every interview or at the end of each day. By so doing, it was possible to capture a significant portion of reports and observations jotted down in symbolic forms. Second, with each tape labelled, recorded interviews were transformed into transcripts, using the word processor on my lap top computer. I ensured that there was a file for each interview on my computer and afterwards, I organized the interviews in accordance with their respective locations. Thus the word processing package became my first analytic aid. This was a very challenging aspect of the research as there were times when it was hard to make sense of some aspects of the recordings, especially the FGDs. Therefore, for every interview granted, several hours of transcription were needed. Most of the interviews were conducted in Hausa language and sometimes respondents spoke in both Hausa and English languages. Because of my mastery of the Hausa, language, I translated all the interviews into English and transcribed them into word document; which made the work quite engaging.³³⁴ In order to ensure the reliability of my transcription, I invited Mr. Ezekiel Daluk and Mr. Joseph Yakubu in Jos to listen to two of the tapes and to read my English version of their transcription. They opined that I adequately captured the interviews.

³³³ Ibid., 104.

³³⁴ I was born in Barakin-Ladi, Jos and was a Hausa language teacher for many years.

The NVivo Computer Software Package

In contemporary qualitative analysis, computing has become a key feature for effectively coding data and the codes are in turn used for retrieving, linking and sorting data. While there are different computer strategies available for qualitative research, the constant requirement in all is that they must be carefully utilized. It is also stressed that “no single software package can be made to perform qualitative data analysis in and of itself.”³³⁵ According to Dey: “A computer can help us to analyze our data, but it cannot analyze our data...we must do the analysis.”³³⁶ That means it is the duty of the researcher to carefully utilize the various derivations from the software chosen in order to provide meaningful accounts. However, the ‘code and retrieve’ computer programmes, as they are usually called, “are designed to allow the analyst to mark segments, and then to search the data, retrieving and collecting all segments identified by the same code or by some combination of code words.”³³⁷ And while this in itself is not the analysis of data, it is a part of the process of analysis which helps to organize data for meaningful presentation.

In this research, I used the NVivo software programme provided by the university. First, all transcribed materials consisting of my data and memos, which had been in the ‘word’ files, were transferred into the NVivo ‘sources’. This was quite straightforward since all my data were textual. Next, I categorized each interview by creating nodes, namely, ‘Free Nodes’ and ‘Tree Nodes’ which helped to bring out the various emerging themes and sub-themes of the narratives. In the NVivo software, data are coded as nodes. They are called nodes rather than codes because they could be moved around or merged in the course of analysis. In this way various concepts in the data were merged and re-classified in order to make meaningful categorization possible. Since “there is no one best or correct approach to the analysis of focus group data”³³⁸ the NVivo software was used to analyze both the individual and FGD

³³⁵ Amanda Coffey and Paul Atkinson, *Making Sense of Qualitative Data: Complementary Research Strategies* (London: Sage Publications, 1996), 166.

³³⁶ Ian Dey, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, (London: Routledge, 1993), 55.

³³⁷ Coffey and Atkinson, 169.

³³⁸ Stewart and Shamdasani, “Focus Group Research”, 515.

interviews. In FGD interviews, computers can be an extremely useful tool for analysis and determining key themes.³³⁹

The nature of semi-structured interviews was advantageous for the categorization of my data with the NVivo software. According to VandeCreek et al, “The major advantage of this [semi-structured] method is the ease of its analysis; its categories are already identified by each preset question and the researcher has only to organize the material within each question.”³⁴⁰ Therefore, each of my preset questions gave clues to the emerging themes of the study. For example, from the question “What was the cause of the conflict in this place?” the massive data generated was categorized under “Cause of Conflict,” using Tree Nodes. However, the usefulness of the NVivo was not merely to bring out themes coming from the preset questions. I came to recognize other sub-themes emerging from the interviews which went beyond the confines of the semi-structured questions and Free Nodes were used to take account of these emerging themes.

On the whole, I found the NVivo software very useful for coding and classification. NVivo made it possible to systematically arrange my data and to make comparisons between individual respondents and cases, here represented by the two conflicts investigated.³⁴¹ Through the various ‘queries’ possible with the NVivo, I was able to note similarities and contrasts between the Jos and Maiduguri conflicts as presented in chapter four. The NVivo package therefore made it possible for me to store my text documents, edit them when necessary, code them into Tree Nodes and Free Nodes, and link what I wrote in one file with another file easily. Through the attributes of documents and nodes, additional information on people and cases were stored in the NVivo, to make presentation of the data clearer. Also, it was possible to capture observations made about persons or places through reflections which I recorded in memos.

³³⁹ Ibid.

³⁴⁰ VandeCreek et al, 101.

³⁴¹ Pat Bazeley and Lyn Richards, *The NVivo Qualitative Project Book* (London: Sage Publication Books, 2000), 130. They mentioned the role of NVivo in comparing issues across contexts.

Narrative Analysis

Analysing data is not merely classifying, categorizing, coding or collating data; they have to be constructed into meaningful accounts of social life. Analysis therefore implies ‘representation’ of accounts about social actors by making a prime focus of their lived experiences.³⁴² Since there are many ways of doing this, it is the task of the researcher to make a choice of how to represent and reconstruct the social worlds and social actors in such a way as to adequately present the account. For this research, I adopted the ‘narrative analysis’ method which I considered most suitable for the nature of my topic and the data collected. Dealing with conflict requires substantial narration.

In narrative analysis, the focus is on working out structures and plots of stories told during interviews. Sometimes, it includes constructing a coherent narrative from several episodes gathered in interviews.³⁴³ Bryman describes narrative analysis as

an approach in elucidating and analysing data that is sensitive to *temporal sequence* [italics mine] that people, as tellers of stories about their lives or events around them, detect in their lives and surrounding episodes and inject into their accounts. With narrative analysis, the focus of attention shifts from ‘what actually happened?’ to ‘how do people make sense of what happened?’³⁴⁴

Therefore, narrative analysis is characterized by both sequential and thematic features. Bryman further states that when an interview question contains aspects such as: “tell me what happened?” and followed with, “and then what happened?” such interviews are more likely to provide a narrative account for narrative analysis. Narrative analysis therefore aims to “elicit interviewees’ reconstructed accounts of connections between events and between events and contexts”.³⁴⁵ Bryman further states that narrative analysis in qualitative research “can be applied to data that have been created through a variety of research methods, notably semi-structured and unstructured interviewing and participant observation...”³⁴⁶ Because this research

³⁴² Coffey and Atkinson, 108.

³⁴³ Kvale, 112.

³⁴⁴ Bryman, 412.

³⁴⁵ Ibid., 413.

³⁴⁶ Ibid.

took the form of semi-structured interviews, the mode of narrative analysis was adopted.

The assumption of narrative analysis is that: “Story telling...is what we do with our research materials and what informants do with us [and]....Narrative analysis takes as its object of investigation the story itself”.³⁴⁷ It is not only concerned about past actions, but individuals’ perception of those actions.³⁴⁸ This aspect of the individual’s perception of actions helped to generate and analyze the perspectives of the respondents on the conflicts. Also, through their perspectives on what their religions teach on the subject of conflict, a basis for a theology of conflict transformation was established.

Although there are no lists of procedures generally recognized as representing the narrative method of analysis, Elliot says that there is a “spectrum of approaches to texts that take narrative form.”³⁴⁹ Riessman also suggests stages of narrative analysis to include: asking few broad questions at the time of interviewing, transforming the talk into writing, which involves selection and reduction; arranging and rearranging the texts in light of discoveries in a clear *sequential* order and in a process of testing, clarifying and deepening the researcher’s understanding of what is happening in the discourse.³⁵⁰

The technique adopted in this narrative analysis focused on both the content (what happened and why) and the form (structure) of the narrative in its coherence and complexities, as suggested by Elliot.³⁵¹ Therefore, emphasis was placed on what was said, how the informants interpreted what was said (how they made sense of the conflicts), and my own analysis. This made it necessary for me to read and re-read the texts of the data in order to have an interpretative and reflexive understanding of the issues. Experts affirm that reflexive reading will seek to explore the researcher’s

³⁴⁷ Catherine Kohler Riessman, *Narrative Analysis* (London: Sage Publication, 1993), 1.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 17.

³⁴⁹ Jane Elliot, *Using Narrative in Social Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (London, Sage Publications, 2005), 36

³⁵⁰ Riessman, 60.

³⁵¹ Elliot, 38.

role in the process of data generation and interpretation.³⁵² With this approach and the assistance of the NVivo computer software, it became possible to present a story line and still elucidate on the various themes which emerged from the interviews because the transcripts were organized and coded both chronologically and thematically for analysis. The themes which emerged were used to form various headings and subheadings in the presentation of the data. Thus, the narrative analysis adopted emphasized both the temporal and social structure of the data generated. And because two different conflicts were studied, it was possible to identify patterns and processes, and commonalities and differences in them. Both the individual interviews and the FGDs were analyzed in the same way since “Analysing focus groups is basically the same as analysing any other qualitative self report data.”³⁵³

Dealing with Self

An issue to contend with in an interview of this nature is the self. The self is the key fieldwork tool³⁵⁴ and the personal identity of a researcher can affect his interaction with the interviewees as to affect the data. The issue of neutrality on the part of the researcher has been contentious and dealing with it became my concern all through the stages of the study. As a Christian, a pastor, and one who had previously been involved in the management of various religious crises in my country, it became necessary for me to constantly reflect on my role as a researcher and as an interpreter of the thoughts of others. I therefore attempted to be as neutral as I could be, but as experts have said, there are certain integral attributes of a researcher that are already fixed and cannot be changed or neutralized. Denscombe said:

We bring to interviews certain personal attributes which are ‘givens’ and which cannot be altered on a whim to suit the needs of the research interview. Our sexes, our age, our ethnic origin, our accent, even our occupational status, all are aspects of our ‘self’ which, for practical purposes, cannot be changed.³⁵⁵

³⁵² Mason, 149.

³⁵³ Stewart and Shamdasani, “Focus Group Research”, 42.

³⁵⁴ Shulamit Reinharz, “Who Am I? The Need for a Variety of Selves in the Field” in Rosanna Hertz, ed. *Reflexivity and Voice* (London: Sage Publications, 1997), 3.

³⁵⁵ Denscombe, 170.

In qualitative research, it is impossible to completely detach the personality of the researcher from the manner of generating and interpreting data. Any piece of qualitative research is therefore influenced by the researcher's individual attributes. In fact, Brueggeman has insisted that the knowledge of anything cannot be independent of the knower. David Lyall recalled him saying: "our attitudes and opinions [to knowing] depend to a large extent upon the place where we stand"³⁵⁶. And in another work, Brueggeman argued that our ways of knowing always include "*what we bring in* [*italics mine*] from our own experience and how they rub on the ideas we receive, their interaction with each other and their illumination of each other."³⁵⁷ In other words, knowledge comes from a dialogue between 'what we bring in' and the ideas we receive.

Despite the presence of all the essentially fixed features mentioned above, I determined to maintain the principle of objectivity by minimizing the impact of my personal identity. Denscombe suggests: "Passivity and neutrality are the order of the day. The researcher's 'self', adopting this approach, is kept firmly hidden beneath a cloak of cordiality and receptiveness to the words of the interviewee".³⁵⁸ Yet the reality of my experience suggests that I could not completely detach my views from the voices of my respondents. Researchers are active participants in the research processes. Their positions and interests are usually imposed on all the stages of research. They decide what questions to ask and what to ignore, whom to study and whom to ignore.³⁵⁹ In fact, as author, it is said about the researcher:

Author decides whose stories and quotes to display and whose to ignore. The decision to privilege some accounts over others is made while developing theories out of the data collected. As they shift between data and theory, scholars make decisions about the voices and placement of respondents within the text.³⁶⁰

In qualitative research, we cannot avoid hearing both the author's voice and those of his respondents. Rubin and Rubin buttressed this point:

In qualitative interviewing, the researcher is not neutral, distant or emotionally uninvolved. He or she forms a relationship with the interviewee and that relationship

³⁵⁶ David Lyall, *Integrity of Pastoral Care* (London: The Cromwell Press, 2001), 82.

³⁵⁷ Walter Brueggemann, *Praying the Psalms* (Winona: Saint Mary's Press, 1993), 13.

³⁵⁸ Denscombe, 171.

³⁵⁹ Rosanna Hertz, "Importance of Self to Field Study" in Rosanna Hertz ed. *Reflexivity and Voice* (London: Sage Publications, 1997), viii.

³⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, xii.

is likely to be involving. The researcher's empathy, humour, and sincerity are important tools for the research.³⁶¹

Rather than neutrality, which they considered unachievable, they have called for a "balance" as follows:

Neutrality is probably not a legitimate goal in qualitative interview research. For one thing, it is impossible to attain. Even if a neutral role were possible, it is not desirable, because it does not equip the researcher with enough empathy to elicit personal stories or in-depth description. Once researchers recognize that neutrality is neither possible nor useful in the research, they have to learn to handle emotion so that it does not hurt the research. To deal with this – you attempt to go for a balance, rather than neutrality. One should ask about the multiple sides of the story.³⁶²

Thus the qualitative methodology does not merely seek to know from the research participants. It upholds the constructionists' method of knowing in which knowing comes from a shared interaction between the observer and the observed. Knowledge therefore comes through the dialogical or narrative explorations of meaning between the interviewees and the interviewer.³⁶³ Therefore, the approach to knowing was by a critical engagement between my interviewees and me. No matter how neutral one attempts to be in one's pursuit of knowledge, one cannot separate one's subjectivity from one's knowing and value free knowledge, which is the stance of *positivism*, is impossible.³⁶⁴ According to Kelly, "...qualitative methods are utilised to hear the narratives of others which stimulates a process of ongoing dialogue with our personal perceptions, promoting a new interpretation of reality."³⁶⁵ It was in this dialogical manner of thinking that this exploration of conflict in Jos and Maiduguri was carried out. I have represented their views in this account in dialogue with my thoughts since "only the human mind can 'read' human expressions and grasp meaning."³⁶⁶

Problems Encountered During Field Work

Problems are inevitable for the researcher. First, the sensitive nature of the investigation caused various problems to become manifest. Some interviewees

³⁶¹ Herbert J. Rubin and Irene S. Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data* (London: sage Publications Inc., 1995), 12

³⁶² Ibid., 13.

³⁶³ Pamela Cooper-White, *Shared Wisdom: Use of the Self in Pastoral Care and Counselling* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004), 45.

³⁶⁴ Ibid., 44.

³⁶⁵ Ewan R. Kelly, *Marking Short Lives: Constructing and Sharing Rituals Following Pregnancy Loss* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2007), 34.

³⁶⁶ VandeCreek et al, 76.

found it difficult early in the interviews to open up on the topic of discussion, even though their consent was sought before the interview. This called for a lot of promptings in order to generate response in some cases. Second, there were those who accepted to grant interviews, but were nowhere to be found on the appointed days. Consequently, I had to rearrange several meetings and this was quite hectic, given the distance between Abuja (which was my location), and Jos and Maiduguri. While such rearrangements worked out well in some cases, in others, it simply did not. In the same vein, there were those who were too busy to attend to me even though they appeared to have been sincere in granting their consent for the interview. This caused delays for me and brought additional costs on accommodation and feeding.

Third, there were those who were afraid of granting interviews on the ground that I was a spy who might facilitate their arrest. A member of my FGD in Jos told me that some people who had granted some form of interviews in the past were rounded up by the police after being interviewed. He opined that that might be responsible for the absence of some of the people that had been invited to participate in the FGD.

Fourth, there were problems with attempts to get 'neutral' opinions on the issues of the religious conflicts studied. Frantic efforts to get one or two people who would claim no allegiance to either Christianity or Islam were unsuccessful. All the interviewees in this research professed either Islam or Christianity. In Northern Nigeria, such is the pattern.

Fifth, there were some difficulties with the environment in which most Muslim women were interviewed. Being a man, I had to approach Muslim women in the company of other women. Their presence throughout the periods of interviews gave the Muslim women the needed cultural environment to meet me, but it certainly affected the way they responded to the questions. On some occasions, female respondents had to be interviewed in the company of either their children or husbands and the presence of other people in individual interviews could affect the research processes from several angles.

Sixth, there were problems associated with remuneration. Some of the people interviewed, particularly in the FGDs, told me that they had been interviewed by

several Europeans before who brought them either money or relief materials in return. In fact I was shown some humanitarian assistance given some communities which they claimed were not enough, and which they anticipated my coming would supplement. It was a hard task explaining to them that I was a student with meagre resources for my research. Again some people just refused to grant interviews on the grounds that in previous interviews, promises made by their interviewers were not fulfilled. They therefore tacitly accused me and others like me of using their information to make money and giving them nothing in return. Such agitations called for elongated explanations in order to get along with some participants.

THEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

The specific theological discipline to which this research is contributing is practical theology. As such, the main theological methodology utilized comes from practical theology. But due to the nature and context of the research, which concerns Christians and Muslims in Nigeria, the methodology also involved some elements of contextual and comparative theologies. Practical theology shares a lot of things with other theological disciplines and each branch of theology “is dependent on, draws on and services the work of the other”³⁶⁷. Also, any theological method “may be combined in one respect or another with others.”³⁶⁸

At this point, it is important to state that the researcher’s theological reflection should not be expected to move from one theological step to another. That means these three theological systems should not be regarded as independently used. Rather, in this study, it is better to see all the theological processes going on together in the direction of practical theology. However, before going to the method of practical theology, it is incisive to briefly explain what this theological discipline is.

³⁶⁷ Paul Ballard and John Pritchard, *Practical Theology in Action: Christian Thinking in the Service of Church and Society*, (London: SPCK, 1996), 15.

³⁶⁸ Roger Haight, *Dynamics of Theology* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1990), 190.

Practical Theology

The term practical theology is used in various ways to denote various things in different settings. This must be why Ballard and Pritchard said: “Practical theology is problematic”³⁶⁹ and they are not alone in this assertion. Poling and Miller said:

There are several *valid ways* [italics mine] of perceiving the discipline of Practical theology to which we can each turn as we face different problems in a variety of contexts [and]...they identify the types of Practical theology that are available. We can assume that each type has validity within some context, and we must agree that each type has inherent limits.³⁷⁰

Despite this, it is important to reflect on some definitions and explanations of the concept of practical theology as provided by scholars. Duncan Forrester defines practical theology as “that branch of theology which is concerned with the questions of truth in relation to action [and which]...points to a deep reciprocity between theory and practice, whereby theological understanding not only leads to action but also arises out of practice.”³⁷¹ Two key elements are distinguished in this explanation, namely, “theory” and “practice”. For Ballard and Pritchard, practical theology is a particular theological discipline which deals specifically “with Christian life and practice within the Church and in relation to wider society.”³⁷² Here also, there are two observable elements namely, ‘Church’ and ‘society’. Also, practical theology has been defined as “theological reflection that is grounded in the life of the church, society, and the individual and that both critically recovers the theology of the past and constructively develops theology for the future.”³⁷³ The additional insights from this understanding of practical theology are that it involves the individual (apart from the Church and society) and it reflects on the theology of the past in order to develop theology for the future. And speaking more on “theological reflection”, Graham et al said it

enables the connections between human dilemmas and divine horizons to be explored, drawing on a wide range of academic disciplines including social sciences, psychotherapeutic and medical disciplines and the arts. At the heart of theological

³⁶⁹ Ballard and Pritchard, 9.

³⁷⁰ James N. Poling and Donald E. Miller, *Foundations for a Practical Theology of Ministry* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985), 30.

³⁷¹ Duncan Forrester, “Divinity in Use and Practice” in *Theology and Practice* ed. Duncan Forrester, (London, Epworth, 1990), 7.

³⁷² Paul Ballard and John Pritchard, *Practical Theology in Action: Christian Thinking in the Service of Church and Society*, (London: SPCK, 1996), 1.

³⁷³ (<http://theoblogy.blogspot.com/2005/02/what-is-practical-theology-part-i.html>)

reflection, therefore, are the questions about the relationship of theory and practice and how to connect theological discourse about the nature of God to the exercise of faith.”³⁷⁴

In other words, theological reflection enables one to “relate the resources of faith to the issues of life.”³⁷⁵ And when one advances theologically authentic responses which can engage the dilemmas of people’s lives in such a way that people can live meaningfully, Tillich calls that task *correlation*. The method of correlation therefore aims to provide answers to questions. In correlation, answers from revelation are used to speak to “questions concerning the whole of existence.”³⁷⁶ I shall speak more on correlation in the next section.

It is argued that the term ‘practical theology’ could easily be misunderstood in the sense that it is sometimes conceived by people as being concerned merely with ‘practical’ things as opposed to ‘theory’. But even though this branch of theology is actively concerned with ‘practical’ issues, it also gravely engages in the development of ‘theological theory.’³⁷⁷ Accordingly, Gerben Heitink defines practical theology as “the empirically oriented theological theory of the mediation of Christian faith in the praxis of modern society”.³⁷⁸ That means that theological theory is founded on experiential matters and meant to transform practice in the society. It therefore conveys the idea of a correlation between theory and practice, Church and society, and reflection and application.

Swinton and Mowat state that practical theology takes seriously the idea of “performing the faith”.³⁷⁹ For them,

Practical Theology is the critical, theological reflection on the practices of the Church as they interact with the practices of the world, with a view to ensuring and enabling faithful participation in God’s redemptive practices in, to and for the world.³⁸⁰

³⁷⁴ Elaine Graham, Heather Walton and Frances Ward, *Theological Reflections: Methods* (London: SCM Press, 2005), 6.

³⁷⁵ Ibid.

³⁷⁶ Ibid., 154.

³⁷⁷ Gerben Heitink, *Practical Theology: History. Theory.Action Domain* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 7.

³⁷⁸ Ibid., 6.

³⁷⁹ Swinton and Mowat, 4.

³⁸⁰ Ibid., 6.

The four ideas being emphasized in the above definition are that practical theology is critical, a theological reflection, interactive with practices in the world and enables participation in God's redemptive practices.

Further, Ballard and Pritchard have argued that while practical theology is a distinguished discipline within theology; it is not negotiated in isolation from other theological disciplines. Rather, it shares "in the common theological calling of all the other theological disciplines."³⁸¹ Regarding this theological interrelatedness, Forrester argues:

there has perforce to be a division of labour although not such that the various theological disciplines neglect dialogue with each other or refuse to cultivate the fascinating borderlands between specific branches of theology and secular studies.³⁸²

Thus, the relationships of the various theological disciplines are neither exclusive of one another or other 'outside' disciplines. Rather, practical theology involves other disciplines, both theological and non-theological, like it is the case between practical theology and the social sciences. As such, the approach of practical theology in this thesis engages elements of contextual and comparative theologies, as well as the context of conflict explored through the socio-scientific methodology.

Method of Practical Theology

Due to the various angles from which practical theology could be viewed, the task of identifying the method of practical theology is not a simple one. Yet, Poling and Miller have suggested that the method of practical theology, whatever 'type' it is, oscillates around two axes. First, it involves "The critical method which is used to bring together the various interpretations available in the Christian tradition and culture". Second, it involves "The relationship between the Church and society"³⁸³. Therefore, the two axes of the method of practical theology focus on facilitating the Church's faithfulness to its identity and its dialogue with the society. In other words, the methodology concerns the formation of the Church and society.

By combining the two axes of the method of practical theology, Poling and Miller suggest six types of practical theology. Each of the six types suggested emphasizes

³⁸¹ Ballard and Pritchard, 5.

³⁸² Forrester, "Divinity in Use and Practice", 7.

³⁸³ Poling and Miller, 30.

either the formation of the Church's identity or its dialogue with the society. And while the types are not mutually exclusive, "each of the [six] types has value in certain contexts and limitations in others".³⁸⁴ Therefore, since one type may not serve as the most adequate for all times and places, this research adopted Poling and Miller's 'Type IIA' in developing its practical theology method. In this construct, they assert that: "Practical theology can take the form of *a critical correlation* [italics mine] of the Christian tradition and contemporary philosophy and science in its concern for the formation of society".³⁸⁵ The two associating concepts here are 'Christian tradition' and 'formation of society'. Also, on the context of this type of practical theology, they said: "Thus it is evident that, while starting with Christian faith and theological themes from the Judeo-Christian tradition, the basic thrust of *Type IIA* is toward a critical correlation that informs the development of society."³⁸⁶ Since it is part of the task of practical theology to move from the insights of the Church and its tradition into the larger society, in order to enrich and transform society, I adopted this approach to practical theology. The problem of religious conflict in Nigeria is one that concerns the entire society and the goal of this thesis is to provide theological reflections which can transform the Nigerian society through the participation of the Church. Poling and Miller further state:

A Church that refuses to move this way deserves to be irrelevant and ignored. The future of society may depend on persons who are the product of the Christian tradition becoming involved and committed to the public discussion in a pluralistic setting.³⁸⁷

Because Nigeria is such a 'pluralistic setting,' the Type IIA approach of Practical theology largely gave insight to the method used. The Church is called to be involved in the pluralistic Nigerian society by working hand-in-hand with the adherents of other faiths to transform religious conflict.

³⁸⁴ Ibid., 35. See also 36 – 60.

³⁸⁵ Ibid., 43.

³⁸⁶ Ibid.

³⁸⁷ Ibid., 46.

Critical Correlation

Critical correlation should not be seen merely as a one-way traffic in which theology provides all the answers to questions from culture. This was the initial way in which Tillich presented correlation. David Lyall recalled Tillich as follows:

In using the method of correlation, systematic theology proceeds in the following way: it makes an analysis of the human situation out of which the existential questions arise, and it demonstrates that the symbols used in the Christian message are the answers to these questions.³⁸⁸

Hitner sees Tillich here as demonstrating the relevance of theology to life. He affirmed Tillich's correlation thus: "theology does not talk in a corner by itself but speaks to the vital questions men ask. Thus he says to the theologian that culture and life cannot be neglected, and to the ordinary man that faith has a message for him."³⁸⁹ However, Hiltner's work has proposed a dialectical relationship between theology and pastoral care as a useful critique of Tillich's position, opening up a new chapter in pastoral/practical theology. For Hitner, correlation theology should be seen as a 'two-way-street'. "Culture may have answer to questions raised by faith as well as faith have answers to questions raised by culture."³⁹⁰ Correlation should be dynamic, mutual and dialectical. Graham et al recalled Hitner's words saying: "We believe that the full two-way street is necessary in order to describe theological method."³⁹¹ And in an attempt to harmonize both Tillich and Hitner, Tracy developed his revised critical correlation saying: "The task of theology is to locate itself at the interface between human experience and culture, and Christian truth claims" and this leads to "a process of mutual interrogation" in which both sources of data pose questions and answers"³⁹² Lastly, like Hiltner and Tracy, Whitehead and Whitehead perceive correlation as dialogue that is mutually transforming. For them, practical theology of ministry understands theological reflection to be the "process of bringing to bear in the practical decisions of ministry the resources of Christian faith".³⁹³ They hold that

³⁸⁸ Lyall, 32.

³⁸⁹ Steward Hiltner, "The Meaning and Importance of Pastoral Theology" in *Pastoral and Practical Theology* eds. James Woodward, Stephen Pattison and John Patton, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2000, 45.

³⁹⁰ Ibid.

³⁹¹ Graham et al., 158.

³⁹² Ibid., 159-160.

³⁹³ Ibid., 161.

this process of theological reflection is problem-centred, transformative and correlative and that the “goal is a pastoral decision, a ministerial response to contemporary decision”.³⁹⁴ Theological competence is thus measured according to practical efficacy and the triangular conversation by which Christian tradition, personal and corporate experience and cultural information, become sources and norms for pastoral action. Therefore, for Whitehead and Whitehead, correlation is a “triangular conversation provoked by a ministerial concern” and complex pastoral questions do not have ready-made answers lying in wait either in the tradition or human experience. But through honest dialogue; tentative, debatable, and reversible solutions may be generated.³⁹⁵

By way of summary, we will understand the correlative method in this thesis as depicted by Graham et al:

The correlative method conceives of theological reflection as occurring via a process of conversation (or correlation) between Christian revelation and surrounding culture. It understands the emergence of Christian practical wisdom as a synthesis between tradition and secular culture such as philosophy, the arts, politics or natural sciences. The realms of grace and revelation, and those of nature or human reason, are partners in the process of theological reflection. The advocates of correlation like Aquinas and Tillich share an essential conviction that there is a convergence between secular wisdom and the language of faith.³⁹⁶

Therefore, I have attempted to bring together the riches of the Christian tradition and the reality of the lived experience of the Church in a situation of religious conflict in Nigeria. The correlation between belief and practice has been explored and how, in my view, the understanding of faith should influence the Church’s pastoral relationships in the midst of religious conflicts has been considered. In this thesis, correlation has involved my own beliefs, feelings and perception; perception of the Christian tradition, especially the Bible; some aspects of Islamic belief; elements of indigenous African religion and the conflict situation being examined.³⁹⁷

³⁹⁴ Ibid.

³⁹⁵ Ibid., 161-162.

³⁹⁶ Elaine Graham, Heather Walton and Frances Ward, *Theological Reflections: Sources*, London: SCM Press, 2007, 268.

³⁹⁷ See Graham et al., *Theological Reflections: Sources*, 279.

Components of Practical Theology Method

Specifically, Poling and Miller elaborated on six steps involved in the methods of practical theology in order to give some structure to its processes.³⁹⁸ I found these essential components useful and adaptable for the present study. And while I will only list the six components in this section, I do hope to demonstrate through the subsequent chapters, how these different aspects of practical theology have been used in this study.

1. Description of lived experience
2. Critical awareness of perspectives and interests
3. Correlation of perspectives from culture and the Christian tradition
4. Interpretation of meaning and value
5. Critique of interpretation
6. Guidelines and specific plans for a particular community

Practical Theology and Qualitative Research Methods

In their book, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*, Swinton and Mowat drew attention to the great potential of qualitative research as “a useful tool for the practical theologian”³⁹⁹ although they did not deny the fact that the two methods may experience some ‘tensions’ which must be resolved. Part of the tension comes from the fact that the relationship between the social sciences and theology is such that theology seeks to perpetually produce the answer while the social sciences produce the question. Theology seeks to use the symbols of the past (Scripture and tradition) to shape the present day experience of the world and not vice versa. However, as mentioned about Hitner’s correlation, there is a mutual dependence between questions and answers. Answers are irrelevant without questions and questions depend on answers.⁴⁰⁰ For theology to be relevant in this sense therefore there must be mutual dependence between practical theology and social contexts. On a more general note, Swinton and Mowat claim that

³⁹⁸ See Poling and Miller, 69-95. See also Ballard and Prichard’s ‘Pastoral Circle’ in *Practical Theology in Action*, 77-79. Also, see “Nature of Practical Theology” by Alastair V. Campbell in Duncan B. Forrester ed. *Theology and Practice*, (London, Epworth Press, 1990), pp. 18-19.

³⁹⁹ Swinton and Mowat, 71.

The social sciences have offered practical theologians vital access to the nature of human mind, human culture, the wider dimensions of the Church life and the implications of the social and political dimensions of society for the process of theological reflection...they have offered Practical Theology a useful mode of dialogue that has enabled it to uncover important data for theological reflection.⁴⁰¹

Therefore, qualitative research may provide the questions which practical theology seeks to answer and Haight argued that “present-day questioning and experience is also a genuine source for theology... [And] without a question, without inquiry, scripture and tradition remain mere data”.⁴⁰²

In this research, the critical reflection done on the semi-structured interviews with respondents in Jos and Maiduguri served as the instrument of uncovering of the theology of hospitality as developed in this thesis. Through the qualitative interviews, the situations of religious conflict were explored, as found in details in chapter four. These events of religious conflict have helped to show the wider dimension of Church life in Nigeria, which involves living with adherents of other religions, particularly Muslims. The information uncovered through the semi-structured interviews became the ground for reflections on a theology of hospitality which in turn gives guidelines to the matters of conflict transformation in Nigeria. In other words, the concept of hospitality came directly from my interviewees in Jos and Maiduguri. At the start of my exploration, the notion of hospitality did not occur to me, but it was quite dominant in the view of my respondents as a way through which they expected their relationship with each other to be built. It was reported that where the spirit of hospitality prevailed, there were no losses of lives or destruction of property. This concept, which came from my interviewees, was reflected upon theologically and it became the paradigm suggested for engaging the challenges of the relationship between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria. This two-way traffic, from the lived experience of people to theological reflections and back to the lived experience, is the desired correlation in practical theology. Theology does not always have to provide solution to the lived experience of people (as Tillich first proposed on the subject of correlation); it could be informed by it (as argued by Hiltner). In

⁴⁰⁰ Haight, 193

⁴⁰¹ Swinton and Mowat, vi.

⁴⁰² Haight, 193-194.

this case the events of the conflict and the responses of the people on how the conflict could be handled in the contemporary Nigerian society called for contextual and comparative elements in theologizing on the issue of hospitality. Practical theology, as presented in this thesis therefore enjoys the complementariness of both African and comparative theologies. As such, the theological reflections developed were sourced through the situation of conflict and also ploughed back into the situation of conflict for the purpose of transforming conflict in Nigeria. This is in keeping with practical theology which moves cyclically from live events to theories and back to live events (praxis). In this thesis, hospitality journeyed from the field of conflict to the state of theological reflection and back to the population of conflict as a way of conflict transformation and peace building. In this way, a dialogue was assured between theory and practice.

Contextual Theology

As explained above, the present research also drew insights from contextual and comparative theologies. The term ‘contextual theology’ is itself problematic, because a wide spectrum of contemporary Christian theologies is lumped into this category. Yet, it has been contested that what most of them have in common is their insistence on giving ‘context’ to theologizing.⁴⁰³ While some scholars have argued that all theologies of all generations have been contextual, some others hold a different opinion. However, contextual theologies are formulated from insights drawn from indigenous people who have come to the realization of the fact that traditional theology has not provided solutions to their particular (usually Third World) problems.⁴⁰⁴

Hesselgrave recalled Shoki Coe’s definition of ‘contextuality’ in theology as “critically assessing contexts in the light of *Missio Dei*”.⁴⁰⁵ Contextual theology therefore assumes that “theology, as distinct from doctrine or dogma, only occurs

⁴⁰³ Douglas John Hall, “Contextual Theology”, *Dictionary of Ethics, Theology and Society*, eds. Paul Barry Clarke and Andrew Linzey (London: Routledge, 1996), 172.

⁴⁰⁴ http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m2065/is_n3_v47/ai_17386941

⁴⁰⁵ D.J. Hesselgrave, “Contextualization of Theology”, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984), 271.

where there is a meeting between past traditions and the present realities” and therefore its “analysis of the specific context constitutes a vital component in the praxis of theology”.⁴⁰⁶ This understanding of contextual theology makes it closely related to practical theology. The basic method emphasized by contextual theologians includes: Biblical thought, Christian Tradition, especially the entire apologetic tradition; and important aspects of the 16th Century reformation.⁴⁰⁷ Since this research made use of African theology in its contextual theology, the method of African theology will be explained below.

African Theology

According to Josiah Young, African theology emerged when African theologians broke away from Eurocentric thought by engaging social and religio-cultural analyses in theological formations. He notes that the term “African Theology” is merely a descriptive term which can be misleading and says: “There is no one African theology but distinct works by Africans and broad groupings...”⁴⁰⁸

At the first Pan African Conference of Third World Theologians in 1977, African theologians explained the break from European theologies thus:

The life of our Churches has been dominated by a theology developed with a methodology, a world view and a conception of humanity using Western categories...We believe that African Theology must be understood in the context of African life and culture and the creative attempts of African peoples to shape a new future that is different from the colonial past and the neo-colonial present.⁴⁰⁹

Put differently, Desmond Tutu asserted that the kind of theology which dominated Africa depicted a picture of an African man who “was being redeemed from sins he did not believe he had committed; he was being given answers...to questions he had not asked”.⁴¹⁰ Therefore, African theology is similar to Asian theologies or what have been referred to as Third World Theologies, such as Indian Christian Theology,

⁴⁰⁶ Douglas, “Contextual Theology”, 172.

⁴⁰⁷ Douglas, “Contextual Theology”, 173.

⁴⁰⁸ Josiah U. Young, *African Theology: A Critical Analysis and Annotated Bibliography* (London: Greenwood Press, 1993), 1.

⁴⁰⁹ Pan African Conference of Third World Theologians; 17th – 23rd December, 1977 – G.I.M.P.A., Greenhill, Achimota, Accra-Ghana, Communiqué, (Unpublished Paper), 4-6.

⁴¹⁰ Desmond Tutu, “Whither African Theology” in *Christianity in Independent Africa* eds. E.W. Fashole-Luke *et al* (London: Rex Collins, 1978), 336.

which do not seek to be imitative of Western Theologies.⁴¹¹ Mushete states it succinctly:

African theology will not necessarily be a theology based on the philosophy of the Greeks and their neighbours. It will be one that validly operates on the basis of the cultural and religious experience of African peoples, a theology responding to the questions posed by African society in its contemporary evolution.⁴¹²

The modern world recognizes the shift in Christianity from the West to the non-Western world. In view of this, the main global dialogical partner for Christianity has shifted from Western secularism to Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and other faith expressions.⁴¹³ According to Andrew Walls, this new ‘shift’ in Christianity renders the resources of Christianity of many ages less significant for African Christians, particularly theologically. He called for a flow of new African theological insights as Western theology was practically losing its relevance in Africa.⁴¹⁴

Sources and Method of African Theology

Discussion on the ‘sources’ and ‘method’ of African theology are hard to separate because several issues which are raised in the two areas are interwoven. During the first Pan African Conference of Third World Theologians, a communiqué issued included what the African theologians summarized as the “Sources of [Africa] Theology”.⁴¹⁵ The conference itself was a follow-up to the formation of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWOT) in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, in 1976 at which time the matter of the ‘method’ of African theology was yet anticipated. The theologians stated:

In order to serve the people, the Gospel and the Churches...we need an interdisciplinary methodology of social analysis, biblical reflection and active commitment to be with the people in their endeavours to build a better society.

⁴¹¹ R.S. Sugirtharajah, “Postcolonialism and Indian Christian Theology”, *Studies in World Christianity*, 9,2,2003, 234.

⁴¹² A. Ngindu Mushete, “An Overview of African Theology” in ed. Rosino Gibellini *Paths of African Theology* (London: SCM Press, 1994), 20.

⁴¹³ Alister McGrath, “A Very Brief History of Christian Belief”, *The New Lion Handbook: Christian Belief*, Oxford: Lion Hudson plc, 2006, 19.

⁴¹⁴ A.F Walls, “Towards Understanding Africa’s Place in Christian History”, in *Religion in a Pluralistic Society* ed. J.S. Pobee (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1976), 183.

⁴¹⁵ Pan African Conference of Third World Theologians, 17th – 23rd December, 1977 – G.I.M.P.A., Greenhill, Achimota, Accra-Ghana, “Communiqué”, 5.

Towards this end we have formed today an Ecumenical Association of Africa Theologians [EAAT].⁴¹⁶

The above shows that the EAAT was committed to developing a ‘methodology’ for African theology. Subsequently, during the second meeting of EATWOT which was held in Mexico (7 -14/12/1986), the report from the African theologians included a methodology for African theology, which is discussed below.⁴¹⁷ The methodology provided by the African theologians included aspects of the “sources” of African theology. Therefore, in order to minimize ambiguities on the issue of ‘method’, we need to first consider the sources of African theology.

A study of the sources of African theology has to begin with John Mbiti, dubbed “Father of African Theology”.⁴¹⁸ Enyi Udoh said of Mbiti that he is “the most prolific, indigenous theological author on the continent. His impact upon the theological development in Africa is remarkable.”⁴¹⁹ Examining his theology, John Kinney says that Mbiti suggests four sources of the evolution of African theology. They are the Bible, the major traditions of Christendom, African religions and philosophy and, ⁴²⁰ the contemporary experience of the Church in Africa (AIC’s).⁴²¹ Mbiti himself reaffirmed his four sources of theology (mentioned above) and offered two additional ones, namely, African culture and African history.⁴²²

Like Mbiti, Imasogie has suggested that “Christian theology must...be informed by the contextual milieu of its target audience in such a way that the Word will become flesh among the people”.⁴²³ He further argued that the presence of Christ

⁴¹⁶ Ibid.

⁴¹⁷ K.C. Abraham ed., *Third World Theologies: Commonalities and Differences*, (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1990), 46-47.

⁴¹⁸ Byang H. Kato, *Theological Pitfalls in Africa* (Kisumu: Evangel Publishing House, 1975), 56.

⁴¹⁹ Enyi Ben Udoh, *Guest Christology: An Interpretative View of Christological Problem*, Thesis (Ph.D), Microfiche, Princeton Theological Seminary, 1983, 133.

⁴²⁰ John W. Kinney, “The Theology of John Mbiti: His Sources, Norms and Method, *Occasional Bulletin of Mission Research*, 3, (2), 1979, 65. Kinney does not fix any boundaries to differentiate sources, norms and method.

⁴²¹ Ibid., 66.

⁴²² John Mbiti, “On the Article of John W. Kinney: A Comment”, *Occasional Bulletin of Mission Research*, 3, (2), 1979, 68.

⁴²³ Osadolor Imasogie, *Guidelines for Christian Theology in Africa*, (Achimota: African Christian Press, 1983), 14.

(incarnation) does not become real to the people of one culture on the grounds of the experience of earlier generations and cultures, but “on the basis of authentic discernment by every generation”.⁴²⁴ In this case, the worldview of Nigerians must be taken into account in the theological reflections on conflict transformation. This was also the position of Wambutda who insisted that African theology must be informed by African cosmology. For him, African cosmology is deeper than African culture or social values, which he considers to be the products of such cosmologies.⁴²⁵ And in a similar approach, Kwame Bediako insists that modern Africa should source ‘fresh’ Christian theological insights from the matrix of the encounter of the Gospel with the African culture which he calls ‘grassroots’ theology.⁴²⁶ This way of doing theology demonstrates the African experience of life in Christ and its relevance to the African cultural milieu.

For Imasogie, theology must be universally useful but “no theology is authentic and universal if it does not meet the integrated needs of a particular people in a particular historical context.”⁴²⁷ That means the validity of religion depends on its usefulness for the whole of humanity, which is itself dependent on its usefulness among a given people whose worldview has been taken into account. In the case of theological reflections on religious conflict transformation in Nigeria, while it is desired to engage the contemporary situation of Nigeria, I also hope that the suggested approach will be a useful model beyond national frontiers.

Importantly, African theologians have made the claim that the sources of African theology must include the long history of African Christianity,⁴²⁸ which may be why John Parratt said: “Theology in Africa is [a] multi-headed animal...a multiplicity determined to a large extent by situational factors – what determines the form it takes

⁴²⁴ Ibid., 18.

⁴²⁵ D.N Wambutda, “The Interplay Between Cosmology and Theology: A Matrix for African Theologising” in *Foundations of African Theology 1* ed. D.N Wambutda (Jos, EATWOT, Northern Nigeria Area, 1982), 13-14.

⁴²⁶ Kwame Bediako, “Cry Jesus! Christian Theology and Presence in Modern Africa”, The 1993 Laing Lecture given at London Bible College, 5/2/1993, 1-4.

⁴²⁷ Imasogie, 19

⁴²⁸ Young III (7-11) identifies three phases of African Christianity. See *African Theology: Its Origin and Development*, PhD Thesis in Systematic Theology, New York, Union Theological Seminary, 1982, by Muzorewa, Gwinyai Henry.

in West; East and South Africa are cultural, social and political”.⁴²⁹ We can therefore summarize the sources of African theology in the words of Parratt as follows: “Theology, throughout Africa finds its common ground in three basic elements – in the Bible and Christian Tradition, in the African culture and religion, and in the contemporary socio-political situation.”⁴³⁰

On the ‘method’ of African theology, a ‘methodology’ for African theology was presented during the second General Assembly of EATWOT in Mexico in 1986. An excerpt from the African theologians’ ‘report’ says:

Like all Third World Theologies, African Theology is contextual. It is located in space, in time within the living and lived human society. It is there, in that context, that African theologians try to decipher the message of Jesus’ good news addressed to them and to their people. As in all Third World theologies, the methodological approach of African theology is on three levels: (1) the context analysis; (2) sources and foundations; (3) and conceptual tools.”⁴³¹

The three components of the methodology are here briefly expanded as follows:

1. Analysis of the African Context

This has its basis in African complex reality which is the context which gives birth to African theology. The context makes all African theologians, from whatever root, speak the language of liberation from the forces of oppression and pauperization.⁴³²

2. Sources and Foundation

As earlier mentioned, the ‘sources’ of African theology are part of the ‘method’ of African theology. They include the Bible, Culture and the living experience of African people.⁴³³

3. Conceptual Tools

⁴²⁹ John Parratt, “Theological Methodology in the African Context”, Zomba, 1981 (Unpublished Paper), 14.

⁴³⁰ John Parratt, *Inventing Christianity: African Theology Today*, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), 27.

⁴³¹ K.C. Abraham ed., *Third World Theologies: Commonalities and Differences*, (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1990), pp. 46-47. See also A. Ngindu Mushete’s “An Overview of African Theology” in Rosino Gibellini ed. *Paths of African Theology* (London: Orbis, 1994), 18-19.

⁴³² *Ibid.*, 44-50.

⁴³³ *Ibid.*, 49-50.

The conceptual tools of African insights are essential aspects of the method of African theology. They emerge from African worldviews which has no strict border lines between the spiritual and the physical reality.⁴³⁴ The importance of such a contextual dimension as mentioned above to this study is not far-fetched. Religious conflict in Nigeria must be approached contextually, giving regard to Nigeria's religious plurality and cultural milieu. Providing insights which do not engage the Nigerian worldview or context will render the study, to say the least, mere abstract.

Comparative Theology

Practical theology also adopts elements of comparative theology in this study. This is because the subject of religious conflict concerns interreligious relations between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria. By comparative theology, we mean one of the theological disciplines "marked by its commitment to the detailed consideration of religious traditions other than one's own. It is detailed, deeply reflexive, self-corrective in the course of its own investigation, even in regard to its basic questions, methods, and vocabulary."⁴³⁵ Comparative theology involves consideration of religious traditions "other than one's own." One who is involved in comparative theology may have her/his own religious persuasion, but s/he is 'committed' to being as true as possibly to the religious traditions of others. This is quite important to this study as I view myself as a confessional Christian pastor who is sincerely committed to the consideration of crucial issues which are common to Christians and Muslims as means of transforming the incessant religious crisis in Nigeria.

It is important to make a brief statement here on how 'theology' is used in a 'comparative' sense. This is because the dominant historical understanding of the term 'theology' has come from the religious discourse of Christianity as influenced by Hellenistic models. David Tracy states that "Any enterprise that is named 'comparative theology' therefore, must establish that the very enterprise of theology

⁴³⁴ Ibid., 51.

⁴³⁵ Francis X. Clooney, S.J., "Current Theology, Comparative Theology: A Review of Recent Books (1989-1995)", *Theological Studies*, 56, 1995, 521.

is not necessarily a Greco-Christian one”.⁴³⁶ This suggests that ‘theology’ may also refer to non-Christian traditions. Clooney asserts: “As an intellectual discipline, though, theology occurs when religious people scrutinize their own faith traditions with an eye toward understanding (and then living) that faith more adequately”.⁴³⁷ By such an understanding, theology may not be limited to the Christian faith alone since all ‘religious people’ are assumed to be able to ‘scrutinize their own faith traditions with an eye toward understanding’. Again, Clooney says:

Though one must be hesitant about using the term "theology" univocally in reference to many religious traditions (we tend to understand the word against its Christian background), it is useful to work with the hypothesis that comparative theology can be pursued from within any of the religious traditions of the world.⁴³⁸

This is the sense in which comparative theology is employed in this research. Specifically it will refer to the way Christians, Muslims and the adherents of the indigenous religions seek to understand and explain their religions. Essentially, my concern in this thesis is to emphasize areas of convergences between these religious traditions as an approach in the pursuit of peace and the transformation of conflict. When believers from different traditions reason and dialogue together, making comparisons of similarities and differences, they are led to mutual learning and the understanding “that the details of their own traditions are more often than not shared with the theologies of other traditions”.⁴³⁹

Further, Clooney states that comparative theology is “a relatively new discipline” which is situated within “cultural and religious pluralization” and it requires nuance by other areas of theology as it responds to wider issues of culture, society, science, and a variety of local concerns.⁴⁴⁰ And due to the newness of the field, he asserts that comparative theologians “are still finding out how to do their work properly [since] they have not agreed on a specific thematic agenda”.⁴⁴¹ He recalls Tracy’s bold remark that “any contemporary theology that accords theological significance

⁴³⁶ David Tracy, “Theology”, in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, Second ed. (Detroit, Thomson Gale, 2005), 9126.

⁴³⁷ Francis Clooney, S.J., *Hindu God, Christian God* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001), 7.

⁴³⁸ Clooney, S.J., “Current Theology, Comparative Theology”, 521.

⁴³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid., 522.

(positive or negative) to the fact of religious pluralism in its examination of a particular tradition functions as a comparative theology, whether it so names itself or not."⁴⁴²

Although Paul Knitter also agreed that comparative theology is in its 'infancy', he shed some light on how the discipline could be approached. Christians are to "go and see what other religions say about themselves."⁴⁴³ Based on Clooney and Frederick, he said that Christian theologians are not to be like the popular 'arm-chair' anthropologists who write speculatively about cultures they have not engaged.⁴⁴⁴

Rather, theology should involve conversation with the texts of other religions.⁴⁴⁵

Some critics of the approach of comparative theology have strongly felt that such a method could lead to syncretism or the outright abandonment of one's faith. However, those who promote this method have insisted that the understanding of the text of other religions may lead to the re-examination of one's text. Bengt Sundkler gave an account of a Catholic Swiss layman who, as ambassador to India, told the story of how he became a more active Catholic on the foundation of *Vedanta*.⁴⁴⁶

Sundkler asserts:

Rather than automatically leading to syncretism, the approach to another religion, being challenged by it, may in fact lead to the revitalizing of one's own convictions to the discovery of the untapped resources in one's own religious tradition.⁴⁴⁷

That means the avoidance of dialogue with other religions in this way may come from slothfulness towards challenges. And while the texts of other religions can raise questions about the claims of one's faith, they can lead one to digging deeper into the truths of one's scriptures until a greater level of faith is achieved. Therefore, to miss the benefit of interaction with people of other faiths impoverishes one of the untapped resources embedded in the interior of one's faith. Stressing the importance of this kind of transformation for Christians, Lesslie Newbigin wrote:

⁴⁴¹ Ibid., 550

⁴⁴² Tracy, "Theology", 9126.

⁴⁴³ Paul Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religions* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2002), 204.

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid., 206.

⁴⁴⁶ Bengt Sundkler, "Christ and the Religions", *Lutheran World*, Vol. 21 (4), 1974, 363.

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid.

It is not just ‘with all Christians’ but ‘with all other men and women’ that we have to learn who Jesus is. Even the whole testimony of the Christian community as it now is, is not enough to say who Jesus is. The whole Church itself is only learning, and it has to learn through open and humble dialogue with men and women who do not acknowledge him. We see the beginnings of this learning in the New Testament itself. The encounter of Peter with a pagan Roman soldier at Caesarea was not only the occasion for the conversion of the soldier; it was also the occasion for the conversion of Peter and of the Church from a very limited to a much fuller understanding of who Jesus is. That learning has to go on...⁴⁴⁸

Given this argument, it means that religious pluralism in Nigeria is a tremendous source of attaining deeper spirituality for AIRs, Islam and Christianity. And if one so benefits from the challenges brought by interactions with other religions, it follows that one is more likely to treat the others with more respect in such a way that peaceful co-existence is strengthened.

Further arguments refuting the fear of syncretism in comparative theology go back to the historical interactions of Christianity with diverse cultures, secular philosophies and theologies, without damaging the core of the Christian message. For instance, Aquinas developed his theology in dialogue with Aristotle and remained faithful to the nucleus of the Christian message.⁴⁴⁹ If the historical reality is that Christianity has so encountered other cultures and remained faithful to its central message, then it is not a new phenomenon for Christianity to dialogue with other religions and even be influenced by them without losing its essential character.⁴⁵⁰

Specifically on the ‘method’ of comparative theology, Knitter said, “the book on ‘the method of comparative theology’ is still being written.”⁴⁵¹ However, he gave some guidelines on how the field could be explored, relying on his understanding of nuggets from Clooney and Frederick as follows:

First, rather than fashioning comparisons on grand sweeping categories,

Comparative theologians prefer to take *small steps* [italics mine]. They generally try to limit themselves to comparing specific texts, concrete rituals, focused beliefs, particular theologians, limited contexts, or historical periods. They search or sniff out in their apparent similarities or their enticing contracts – and then they dig

⁴⁴⁸ Lesslie Newbigin, *Christian Witness in a Plural Society* (London: The British Council of Churches, 1977), 9.

⁴⁴⁹ Wijzen, 41.

⁴⁵⁰ Richard Schebera, “Comparative Theology: A New Method of Interreligious Dialogue”, *Dialogue Alliance*, Vol. 17 (1) 2003, 14.

⁴⁵¹ Knitter, *Introducing*, 207.

deeply into these particular areas. By limiting the range of their vision, they will increase the depth of their comprehension.⁴⁵²

Second, comparative theologians do not try to tell the others what to do; rather they seek to present an example and allow the choice of what to be done to the adherents of these religions.⁴⁵³ Third, the comparative theologian “takes for granted that the Christian convictions and claims about Jesus as the unique, real, and historical incarnation of God in human history are part of the identity that Christians bring to the task of comparative theology and dialogue with others.”⁴⁵⁴ While this may pose a logical difficulty, Knitter argues that alternative ways of presenting Christianity would appear different from the Christian tradition which other religions would be able to recognize as ‘Christian’.⁴⁵⁵ In my view, it is this way of viewing the Christian faith that can be helpful to the Church in Nigeria as it engages in the task of comparative theology with Islam. Part of the reason is that the Church has successfully utilized a similar approach in negotiating relationships with the adherents of the indigenous religions. Also, it is my view that the call for unity and harmony among religions is not a call to uniformity.

Fourth, Knitter sees comparative theology as naturally dialogical and prone to building friendship across religious groups.⁴⁵⁶ Its approach possesses the potentiality for building good human relationships across religious divides. And since in dialogue, two or more human beings meet, and not just religions, they cannot escape becoming concerned about common social problems to which they must respond.⁴⁵⁷ Comparative theologizing therefore, although not without its own limitations, has a great role to play in the life of the Church in Nigeria as it seeks to be faithful to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to live in harmony with Muslims in the country. I shall speak a little more on this in chapter six.

⁴⁵² Ibid.

⁴⁵³ Ibid., 209-10.

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid., 211.

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid., 210.

⁴⁵⁷ Sundkler, “Christ and the Religions”, 363.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined methodologies and methods adopted in this research. The research involved socio-scientific and theological methodologies. The qualitative research methodology was chosen due to the sensitive and exploratory nature of religious conflict. The qualitative methodology involved the use of semi-structured interviews of individuals and FGDs. The narrative analysis technique was adopted for the analysis of the data collected as assisted by the NVivo computer software. On the theological methodology, the body of knowledge to which this research contributes is practical theology. Also, due to our focus on Muslims and Christians in Nigeria, it became important to seek complementary elements from contextual and comparative theologies. The events of the conflicts as they occurred in Jos and Maiduguri are the concern of our next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

EVENTS OF RELIGIOUS CONFLICTS IN NORTHERN NIGERIA

Introduction

This chapter seeks to examine the events of the religious conflicts which took place in Jos and Maiduguri, the capital cities of Plateau and Borno States, both in Northern Nigeria. This is done partly by exploring written records and mainly from information gathered from people interviewed from these conflict sites. This is in keeping with Lederach's concept of conflict transformation which has been adopted in this thesis in which the 'presenting problem' of conflict serves as 'window' to seeing greater patterns of the conflict. In other words, in conflict transformation, the immediate situation of a conflict must be 'seen' before further exploration is done into the underlying patterns and context of such a conflict.

To buttress his argument on this concept of conflict, Lederach employs another analogy in which conflict is a kind of topography; a relief map with 'peaks' and 'valleys', resulting in a mountain range. For conflict transformation to take place, Lederach opines that one must possess the ability to negotiate adequately between the peaks and the valleys.⁴⁵⁸ Therefore, this thesis seeks to identify both the 'peaks' and the 'valleys' of the religious conflicts under investigation in Northern Nigeria. These peaks (episodes), as presented in this chapter, will serve as 'window' for us to see the valleys (epicentres) as shall be found in chapter five.

It was mentioned in the previous chapter on methodology that the events of conflict which occurred in Jos and Maiduguri would be presented through the method of narrative analysis. To do this, information gathered was transformed from tapes and notes and, through the Nvivo computer assisted programme, categorized and coded into the emerging themes and sub-themes used in this chapter. Because stories are presented chronologically (sequentially) in narrative analysis, the processes of the events have come under the themes of causes, manifestations and consequences. These are followed by the theme of religious teachings on the conflicts. Afterwards,

⁴⁵⁸ Paul John Lederach, *The Little Book on Transformation* (Intercourse: Good Books, 2003), 8.

findings were synthesized by comparing and contrasting the Jos and Maiduguri conflicts according to the emerging themes in order to note the commonalities and uniqueness of the two conflicts. A sub-section on ‘prospects for peace’ followed. It is hoped that these will provide a platform for the development of a relevant theology for the transformation of conflict in Nigeria in chapter six.

The Conflicts

In this section, I present an overview of the two religious conflicts. When conflicts occur, the need to be properly informed about their causes, courses and consequences is not negotiable, if one would adequately be engaged in conflict transformation. In this research, respondents’ views on the religious conflicts which occurred in Jos and Maiduguri are considered very important because the conflicts have attracted varied interpretations and perspectives. Therefore, the existing literatures on the conflicts have been interrogated and questions were designed to determine responses which could provide a base for exploring conflict transformation.

Jos Conflict of September 7-12, 2001

On Friday, September 7, 2001, a violent conflict erupted in Jos, capital of Plateau State.⁴⁵⁹ Long before this time, life in Jos was characterized by tranquillity, which was enhanced by the cool weather, beautiful mountainous topography and of course, a booming commercial life. These features earned the state the popular appellation, ‘Home of Peace and Tourism’. Also, for a long time expatriates were attracted to Jos due to its huge deposit of tin ore. The mining of this metal in Jos and its environs led to the attraction of various people to Jos, giving the city a strategic position in Nigeria’s economy and politics.⁴⁶⁰

⁴⁵⁹ See Plateau State Publication, *Address by Col. Joshua Umoru Anaja, Military Administrator, Plateau State to the religious Leaders on Wednesday, 27th September, 1978*, Jos, The Government Printer, 5-6.

⁴⁶⁰ Plateau State Publication, *Making Peace: The Plateau Experience, An Official Account of the State of Emergency Tenure, May – November, 2004*, Jos, Matchers Publishing Ltd, 2004, p.viii.

Immediate Causes

The immediate cause of the September 7-12 conflict was an outbreak of violence during a *Jumma'at* (Friday) prayer involving a street blockade at the Congo-Russia area of Jos, between some Muslim youths and a Christian lady named Rhoda Haruna Nyam. In her testimony to the panel of inquiry, Rhoda said she had gone to her home on break from work and while returning to work, found out that the main road from her house to her office had been blocked. When she attempted to pass through a footpath near the mosque, she was accosted and beaten by some Muslim youths. In the midst of the trouble, she ran back home for safety but was pursued by the angry youths who also beat up her father when he tried to intervene.⁴⁶¹ This supposed 'little spark of fire' soon became a wild and uncontrollable clash between the Hausa settlers in Jos, who are mainly Muslims, and the predominantly Christian indigenous ethnic groups. Within a short time, the entire population of Jos was engulfed in the violent conflict which came to be defined by religious stricture. The entire city was polarized between Christians and Muslims and at the end of the five days of violence, several hundred lives were lost, property destroyed and places of worship, particularly mosques and churches, razed. Reports have it that about 1,000 people were killed in this single conflict and some 258,000 people temporarily displaced.⁴⁶² The carnage was very devastating, spilling over to other towns and villages in the subsequent days, months and years.⁴⁶³ At that point, the battle was understood mainly from a religious stand point because, in Jos, most indigenous people are Christians and the Hausa/Fulani settlers involved in most of the conflicts are Muslims.

⁴⁶¹ Rhoda Haruna Nyam, "Submission of Memorandum to the Judicial Commission of Inquiry on the September 7, 2001 Jos Crises", *Memorandum Submitted to the Nikki Tobi Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the Jos and Environs Communal/Religious Crisis*, Azi Nyako Youth Centre, Dadin Kowa, Jos, 2001, 1-5.

⁴⁶² Somini Sengupta, "Violence Jolts the Still Fragile Democracy in Nigeria", *The New York Times*, http://www.nigeriavillagesquare1.com/Articles/NYT_plateau_violence.htm, May 24, 2004, 2.

⁴⁶³ See *Overview of Ethno-Religious Crises in Plateau State, 1994-2004*, an unpublished document of the Jos Business School.

Remote Causes

While there may be several remote causes of the event of that fateful day, it is important to note that scholars have emphasized two dimensions, namely, the politics of participation in government between the “indigenes” and the Hausa/Fulani “settlers” and the problem of social integration.⁴⁶⁴ Because most of the interviewees made reference to these underlying factors, it is important to briefly elucidate them in order to make sense of the responses that were made.

The height of the political dimension to the conflict was reached with the creation in 1991 of the Jos North and the Jos South Local Government Areas (LGAs) along religious lines by the Babangida administration. The former was intended to be for Muslims because of their concentration within the main city of Jos while the later was for Christians. Some observers have opined that by such division of Jos, the military administration had anticipated that the capital city of this predominantly ‘Christian’ state would fall into the hands of the Hausa/Fulani Muslim minority, styled *Jasawa*; while the Christians would operate from outside of the capital.⁴⁶⁵ Consequently the Hausa/Fulani began to contest the ownership of Jos with the indigenous people and to seek appointment into top government positions, particularly during military administration. This led to conflicts between the indigenes and the *Jasawa*,⁴⁶⁶ an example being the ethno-communal conflict which ensued on April 12, 1994, in Jos. This was caused by the appointment of Alhaji Aminu Mato of the *Jasawa* stock as the Chairman of the Caretaker Committee of the Jos North LGA, by the Military Administrator (MA), Lt. Col. Mohammed Mana, a Muslim.

The complaint of the indigenes was that, while the other chairmen of the LGAs in the state were indigenes of the local governments they represented, the contrary was the case in Jos where a Hausa/Fulani chairman was appointed. However, the protest of the indigenous Anaguta, Afizere and Berom ethnic groups was ignored by the

⁴⁶⁴ Umar Habila Dadem Danfulani, “The Jos Peace Conference and the Indigene/Settler Question in Nigerian Politics” University of Jos, Unpublished paper, 4.

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid.

MA. Grievances therefore continued from March 30, 1994 until April 8, 1994, when the indigenes thronged the venue of the swearing-in and disallowed the handing over ceremony to the Caretaker Committee. By April 12, 1994, violent clashes had erupted in Jos between the Hausa-Fulani settlers and the indigenes of Jos, which led to the loss of many lives and destruction of property.⁴⁶⁷ This background would give rise to other clashes as would be seen in this study.

Furthermore, in 2001, Alhaji Usman Mohammed Muktar, another Hausa/Fulani, was appointed coordinator for the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) for the state, and this gave rise to another open protest by the indigenes. The development was perceived as a shrewd attempt to exclude the indigenes from the benefits of the state's poverty alleviation programme.⁴⁶⁸ Therefore, since the return to civil rule, the indigenes of Jos have strived to use their voting power to resist *Jasawa* dominance.⁴⁶⁹

Another remote cause of the conflict which several interviewees recalled was social. The indigenes of Jos perceived the 'guest' Hausa/Fulani as failing to integrate with their host communities. Rather, they maintained a form of superiority over them and tended to override them even in matters of day-to-day relationships. For instance, it was said that while the Hausa/Fulani Muslims could marry Christian/indigenous girls, they prohibited their daughters from marrying Christian boys. Also, the indigenes complained that the Hausa/Fulani looked down on them and used intemperate and derogatory language such as *kafirai* and *arna* (Hausa words for 'infidels') to describe them. Therefore, a culture of *raini* (Hausa word for derision) was perceived to govern their disposition towards the indigenes and simple disagreements became liable to escalation.⁴⁷⁰ It was against this background of strong political consciousness and social in-cohesion that the September 7-12, 2001 conflict erupted. Interviews carried out in Jos revealed the lived experiences of the

⁴⁶⁷ Chuwang Gyang Majei, *The Phenomena of Religious Crises: A Case Study of the 1994 and 2001 Mayhem in Jos, Plateau State*, Master of Arts Dissertation, Department of Religious Studies, University of Jos, 2004, 22-24.

⁴⁶⁸ Daniel Gora, "Remote Causes/Suggestions on September 7, 2001 Crisis", *Memorandum to the Nikki Tobi Judicial Commission*, October 23, 2001, 2-3.

⁴⁶⁹ Danfulani, *Indigene/Settler*, 4.

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid.

people and their perceptions of the conflict as contained below. When interviewees were asked to express their views on the cause of the conflict, varying responses were given.

Religion

First, the Jos conflict was perceived by respondents to have been largely caused by religion. They opined that the way religious difference was handled, and the pattern of the conflict which came to be strictly between Christians and Muslims, showed that religion was the foremost factor in the conflict. There were arguments to situate the religious character of the conflict in historical, religious events. According to Sis Florence Golam, a Christian from Jos:

Actually, there is religious bias behind *every* [italics mine] crisis of Jos. Because the jihad could not overtake Jos, and the people have taken to Christianity, there has always been a cold religious war against Jos by the other Islam-dominated states of the North.⁴⁷¹

A number of respondents, particularly Christians, made references to the Usman Dan Fodio Jihad of 1804-8 as the foundation of the Jos crisis and claimed that whatever conflict occurs in Jos between Christians and Muslims in the present can be traced back to that period. I have discussed this event further in chapter five as one of the roots of conflicts in Nigeria.

Patrick Kevin, another Christian from Jos, also followed the historical line of argument on encounters between Muslims and Christians and connects them with the Jos conflict. Accordingly, he asserts:

The problems can be traced back to the days of Sardauna, the first Premier of the Northern Region of Nigeria who wanted to Islamize all of the Northern Region. He wanted to Islamize the indigenes of the Plateau State, particularly, Jos, but our parents resisted his efforts. Things did not go the way he thought and wanted and ever since, the Muslim North has had its eyes on Jos. The Muslims see Jos as the bedrock of Christianity in the North and they are bent on using all means to break through Jos.⁴⁷²

By his argument, Kevin brings the Sardauna into the matters of the religious conflict of Jos. The Sardauna, Sir Ahmadu Bello, was the grandson of Usman Dan Fodio, who led the Sokoto Jihad (1804-8). His account shows that he used his political

⁴⁷¹ Interview with Sis. Florence Golam (Principal, St. Louise College), Jos, 22/3/07.

⁴⁷² Interview with Patrick D. Kevin, Jos, 10/1/07.

office for Islamic expansion in Nigeria. In fact many people feel his agenda was to accomplish what his grandfather left uncompleted through his political power.⁴⁷³ It is the claim of Kevin therefore, that the Sardauna's Islamic campaigns, like his grandfather's Jihad, did not succeed with the indigenes of Plateau State and "ever since, Muslim North has had its eye on Jos." Thus, there is a connection between the present and the past in the Jos conflict. The issue of the core Northern states 'having eyes' on Jos was further expanded by Golam. She says:

Remotely they [Islam-dominated states of the North] have been clamouring for the emirate of Jos. They have adopted the name *Jasawa* in order to identify themselves as Muslims and Hausa. So, we are all aware of that subtle attempt to make Jos a Muslim town and that was what manifested in the conflict. If it had been a Muslim girl that was trying to go to her house during the *Jumaat* prayer in Congo-Russia, they would have allowed her. But because Rhoda is a Christian girl, they found another opportunity to fight the Church. Muslims believe in propagation through force and at any instance.⁴⁷⁴

Here Golam introduces the issue of the emirate system, which is practiced in most parts of Northern Nigeria, where Islam is dominant. The traditional ruler of Jos is addressed as *Gbong Gwom* and most other rulers in Plateau State have their indigenous royal titles. However, in most of Northern Nigeria, traditional rulers are called 'Emir'. "Clamouring for the emirate of Jos" is suggestive of attempting to enforce a cultural practice of Muslims on Jos, which is here used to strengthen the argument that the Jos conflict was religiously motivated. Again, she explains the conflict as a fight against the Church and sees it as forceful propagation of Islam.

Contending further on the religious cause of the conflict, Rev Nathan Nwachukwu says:

Muslims [in Nigeria] have always had their eyes on Jos. They believe in using political power for religious expansion. Islam does not separate between politics and religion and so every opportunity, including force, is used to extend religion. The conflict was mainly religious, even though it had other factors to it.⁴⁷⁵

Nwachukwu, like Golam and Kevin, situates the cause of the conflict to a period long before the events of September 7-12, 2001, by saying: "Muslims have always

⁴⁷³ See more discussion on Sardauna in chapter five on the Roots of Religious Conflict.

⁴⁷⁴ Golam, Jos, 22/3/07.

⁴⁷⁵ Interview with Rev Nathan Nwachukwu, (Acting Conference Secretary, Central Baptist Conference, Senior Pastor, United Baptist Church, Jos) Jos, 23/2/07.

had their eyes on Jos”. He also introduces a political link to the religious factor by saying that Islam does not separate politics from religion.

While the three respondents mentioned above are Christians, it is important to note how some Muslims also spoke about the religious nature of the conflict. According to Isa Salihu, the assistant Imam of Tudun Wada, Jos:

The conflict was purely religious. You know, different people live in Jos and there are different tribes. I saw Birom Christians fighting Birom Muslims, but nothing happened to Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba Christians. I also saw Hausa Muslims killing Hausa Christians.⁴⁷⁶

From the above, Saliu appears to have separated religious issues from ethnicity, which is sometimes solely used to define conflicts. From his point of view, the parties of conflict were clear in their attack of each other. Irrespective of the ethnic group to which the parties belonged, religion appeared to him to have provided the main drive for the conflict.

In his own contribution to the religious nature of the conflict, Sheikh Sanusi brings in a slightly different dimension. He says:

There is the religious aspect of the conflict. Religion in Nigeria is very delicate. There are three main religions in Nigeria and the politicians are quick to employ religion to achieve their selfish ends. Because the Zamfara governor declared a Muslim state, some indigenes [of Plateau State] are saying Jos should be declared a Christian State.⁴⁷⁷

Thus, Sanusi links religion with politics and introduces the issue of the manipulation of religion by politicians, a theme well covered by Bala Usman. And while this study was on the Jos conflict, Sanusi relates it to the political/religious issues of Zamfara State. Being the first Northern Nigerian state to adopt *sharia* (Islamic law), many Nigerians have contended that the declaration by that state (and others) was politically motivated.⁴⁷⁸ By Sanusi’s explanation, Plateau State is perceived to be clamouring for ‘state religion’ like in Zamfara and other Northern Nigerian states. This, to him, is a major explanation of the conflict of Jos.

⁴⁷⁶ Interview with Isa Salihu (Assistant Chief Imam, Tudun Wada), Jos, 14/2/07.

⁴⁷⁷ Interview with Sheikh Abdul-Rahaman Mohammed Sanusi, Jos, 16/2/07

⁴⁷⁸ More is discussed on Sharia in chapter four as one of the root causes of religious conflict in the North.

In the same vein, Sheikh Adamu asserted that the role of religion in the conflict was quite central. He says:

The conflict was mainly caused by religion – even though I feel it is just being used to get sympathy from others. People who are looking for support usually use religion, both on Christian and Muslim sides to achieve their selfish ends. For example, on the issue of the sole administrator/chairmanship of Jos North LGA; the people rejected him because he was a Muslim and a Hausa. If he were a Christian, he would have been free.⁴⁷⁹

Here again allusion was made to a previous conflict which concerned a political office in which religious claims were used to reject the candidate. Adamu's point is that Christians rejected the chairman of the LGA⁴⁸⁰ on the basis of his religion as a Muslim. If he had been a Christian, he would not have been rejected. But this brings in an ethnic dimension to the argument. The man who was rejected by the Christians was not just a Muslim, but a Hausa also. And because the majority of Muslims in Jos are Hausa/Fulani, the tendency is there not to separate religious and political issues. Christians therefore rejected the government nominee on the grounds of religion and this was a part of what built up into the conflict in Jos between September 7 and 12, 2001.

The issue of religious intolerance was also emphasized by respondents. Maisamari and Sanusi strongly opined that intolerance was the cause of the Jos conflict although they perceived the intolerant attitude differently. According to Maisamari, if Rhoda had exercised patience when blocked from passing by the Muslims youths, the whole problem would have been averted. But he blamed the Muslim youths too of impatience. He argued that if they had tolerated the lady and quietly allowed her to pass by the narrow path near the mosque, there would not have been crisis. Therefore, because of the impatience and intolerance of both parties, an avoidable conflict led to a massive mutual devastation of lives and properties of Christians and Muslims in the town. Sanusi, on the other hand, made reference to the tolerance of people of other religions as it is the practice among the Yoruba. He said:

There is need for us to change our upbringing. Among the Yoruba, brothers take different religions, particularly in the areas of ATR, Islam and Christianity and they

⁴⁷⁹ Interview with Sheikh Mohammed Suleiman Adamu, (Director, Awareness for Education and Development Initiatives; Cordinator of Albayan Islamic Secondary School, Jos) Jos, 20/2/07.

⁴⁸⁰ Alhaji Aminu Mato, as mentioned above.

do not quarrel about it. There is patience and tolerance among them, which is lacking between Christians and Muslims in the North. People ought to exercise patience with one another and be tolerant of one another. Our mosque is next door to the Church and we have never had any quarrel with the Christians.⁴⁸¹

Of course a visit to the Ansarudeen mosque of Jos testifies to what Sanusi said. I interviewed him in the mosque and found out that there is no house in between the mosque and the First Baptist Church, Jos. The land on which the Church and the Mosque were built was said to have been given to the religious groups by the same person. Although the proximity between the Mosque and the Church could elicit unplanned contestations, Sanusi affirmed that the two religious institutions had remained tolerant of each other.

Further, on the religious cause of the conflict, members of the FGD opined that if religious dialogue had been taking place regularly between Christians and Muslims, the conflict would have been averted. They therefore blamed the religious leaders for not coming together to foster peaceful co-existence. They also said that religious leaders were not adequately educating their followers on how to live with people of other religions. If this was done, it was believed that there would not have been conflict. Marshi placed the blame of the conflict on religious leaders who were not properly channelling their great influence:

The conflict would have been averted or greatly minimized if the religious leaders had handled their roles effectively. There are various kinds of leaders – The government (political) leaders, the Royal fathers, the traders and the religious leaders. Of all these leaders, *the religious leaders are most accepted by the people* [italics mine]. Recently, through a man's pastor, the staff of the 'Steel Rolling Mills' were able to get their allowances paid. The man had refused to pay them; then the workers reported him to his pastor. By the pastor's intervention, the money was paid back immediately. That is how powerful religious leaders are.⁴⁸²

All these responses make the religious argument for the conflict greatly central. However, there were other causes to the conflict, without which the conflict cannot be adequately understood.

⁴⁸¹ Sheikh Abdul-Rahaman Mohammed Sanusi. (Imam of the Nurudeen Society; 'Murshit' of the Society, Member of the Ulama of Jos North; official of the JNI, Plateau State). Jos, 16/2/07.

⁴⁸² Interview with Sheikh Abdulrahaman Lawal Marshi (Chairman of Ulama of JNI, Jos North, Lecturer, Department of Religious Studies, University of Jos, Member, Council of Ulama and Elders, Plateau State; PhD student, University of Jos), Jos, 18/2/07.

Ethnicity

For some respondents, ethnicity was integral to the conflict of Jos especially as expressed in the settler/indigene issue. The ethnic factor is said to have led to injustice, discrimination, exclusion and disrespect, among other things, and this affected both the indigenes of the state and some settler groups in various ways. According to Saliu,

Also, there is discrimination caused by ethnicity, particularly the indigene/settler issues. Once you are a Muslim you are denied your rights. Hausa/Fulani children are denied state indigene forms for scholarships in schools while Christians even from other states, as long as their names are 'John' or 'James', are given scholarship as indigenes. This has caused many Hausa/Fulani people to have hatred bottled up in their minds. We are denied our right. Once you are a Muslim, you are denied. For example, in the NAPEP issue, it was discrimination that led to the problem.⁴⁸³

Even the discrimination he talks about and the denial of rights, are towards Muslims and Hausa/Fulani. He argues that Christians from other states are able to receive scholarship from the state while the Hausa/Fulani cannot. Discrimination and injustice are also associated to the benefit of government scholarship for the pursuit of education. In this way there is a link between religion, economy and ethnicity.

However, Kevin saw the indigene/settler problem differently. He said:

Our people are in the far Northern states and have no right of indigene-ship there. Why should they [Hausa/Fulani] want to receive from Jos what they are not ready to offer to us in their own states? In fact Plateau people live in *Sabon Gari* in Kano; they are treated as strangers who cannot live within the indigenous communities. Here we have allowed them to live everywhere because of our hospitality. We still believe in hospitality, but there is always a mark of respect between the guest and the host. It is this right we are seeking from all settlers, particularly the Hausa. Can a Plateau man go to Oyo State or Imo State and be seeking indigenization? Why is it that the Hausa are asking Jos to offer what is not being offered anywhere in the country? The matter of indigenization needs to be settled and if it is settled, disrespect will no longer be there. They are not the only settlers in Jos. The Urhobo and Yoruba came before them to Jos but they are not making such demands.⁴⁸⁴

Kevin thus introduced several issues. He opined that the Hausa/Fulani were asking for what they would not give to others in their own states and what other settlers in Jos were not asking for. He felt that Jos people could not claim indigenization in other states and so whatever was happening in Jos was not discrimination. One can infer that he sensed that the entire nation was operating a kind of 'unwritten rule'

⁴⁸³ Saliu, Jos, 14/2/07.

⁴⁸⁴ Kevin, Jos, 10/1/07.

which made everyone an indigene of his own state, not where he settles. This is definitely a case which deserves a separate study. As a person born in Plateau State, where my parents lived and worked for over forty years, owning land and property in the state, my family never attempted to claim indigenization of the state.

Another angle to the ethnic problems in Jos as captured by Kevin above has to do with the disrespect of the indigenes by the Hausa/Fulani settlers. Most of my interviewees of Jos origin mentioned the issue of disregard and ethnic pride by the Hausa. Mrs. Dalyop called attention to unguarded utterances which the Hausa/Fulani often used to address and provoke the indigenes like: *Zama da kaza baya hana yanka*⁴⁸⁵, meaning, “Familiarity with the chicken does not prevent its slaughter”. By this the Hausa/Fulani Muslims were understood to be saying that their acquaintance with the indigenous Christian people would not hinder their slaughter by the Muslims. And because using knives to slit throats is expected to be for animals, indigenes feel disregarded by the Hausa/Fulani who categorize them as such. Also, Dalyop, being an educationist, said she once asked one of the settler children in school how many religions there were in Jos. The child simply told her: *Muslimi da arna* (Muslims and infidels). In her view, that child had been taught from home that whoever is not a Muslim is an infidel. This level of disregard surely has reached the grassroots, and it also concerns religion. Again, Kevin elaborated on ways in which the Hausa settlers usually abused the indigenes. For instance, they could easily say to the indigenes: *ubanka waye a garin nan?* (Who is your father in this town?); and *Kwanan nan garin nan zai zama namu* (Very soon this town will become ours).⁴⁸⁶ Such utterances are perceived by the indigenes to be both socially and religiously contemptuous. Accepting the argument on the disregard of the indigenes by the Hausa, Sanusi said:

Socially, the indigenes feel that the non-indigenes do not respect them, especially the Hausa. We can say here that it is like the case of a tenant not respecting the landlord. Indigenes feel they are not respected and so they are eager to retaliate the disrespect whenever an opportunity opens.⁴⁸⁷

⁴⁸⁵ Interview with Mrs Frances Haruna Dalyop at Jos on 16/2/07.

⁴⁸⁶ Kevin, Jos, 10/1/07.

⁴⁸⁷ Sanusi, Jos, 16/2/07.

Here again, Sanusi connects the disrespect for the indigenes to the causes of conflict. And speaking directly on how the Jos conflict began, Emmanuel Maisamari also alleged disrespect for the indigenes by the Hausa Muslims. He argued that the majority of people in the Congo-Russia area, where the Jos conflict began, were Christians, who were always blocked from moving to their homes during *Jumaat* prayers by a 'small' mosque.⁴⁸⁸ Hence, most people living in the area saw the road blockade as an insult on the entire people in the area. According to him, even long before prayers began, the Muslim youths would block the road from all people. And though these youths called themselves the 'First Aid' unit, they usually acted wildly at the sight of any one attempting to pass. This was seen as disregard for the Christians.⁴⁸⁹ To buttress this point, Dalyop mentioned how the people of the community wrote several letters to Alhaji Tijanni, the one who built the mosque, telling him that the road blockade should stop, but he disregarded them. She said:

The fact that both Alhaji Tijanni and the few people using the mosque had no respect for the feelings of others was very wrong. We complained and complained, but it did not concern them. They have harassed several people on Fridays. Rhoda's case was just one that was overdone by them. Izala Muslims are never sensitive to their environment in the way they block roads.⁴⁹⁰

From the above, I argue here that the issue of ethnicity, whether as expressed in the indigene/settler problem or in the social matters of disregard for the indigenes by the Hausa/Fulani, is inseparably mixed with religion.

Economy

Some interviewees indicated that the conflict was based on economic factors and their arguments had a different emphasis, particularly in the FGD. There were those who said that unemployment and frustration resulting from the failing economy led to the conflict. People who had no food to eat were tensed up and angry, and when the opportunity of violence came, they were available to perpetrate it. Respondents said that most of the people who carried out the carnage were unemployed youths

⁴⁸⁸ He calls this a small Mosque as opposed to the Central Mosque where road blockade has become a norm.

⁴⁸⁹ Interview with Emmanuel Maisamari, Jos, 14/2/07

⁴⁹⁰ Dalyop, Jos, 16/2/07.

who were ready to burst at the slightest opportunity.⁴⁹¹ According to Sanusi, “Many youths are unemployed, so they take advantage of the slightest opportunity to loot. It is said that ‘a hungry man is an angry man.’”⁴⁹² It was therefore the opinion of many people that the creation of job opportunities would help reduce violence in the society.

Another idea on how the economic factor caused the conflict is that the financial successes and the ‘better quality of life’ of the ‘settlers’ were said to be a reason for envy by the indigenes. In this regard it is argued that even though most government employment in the state was held by the indigenes, the settlers controlled the economy as marketers, craftsmen and technicians. Most businesses were owned by settlers while the indigenes, who are largely engaged in ‘white collar’ jobs, were left with no option but to constantly patronize the settlers. Mohammed Hashir Sa’id states: “The indigenes have not been involved in commerce. They work with the government and earn a pittance.”⁴⁹³ Most people in government employment would normally be economically disadvantaged due to poor remuneration. But a few respondents disagreed with the above view. They asserted that most indigenes, being agrarian, concentrate on farming in secluded and remote places while the Hausa and other settlers live in the towns and dominate the business life. Consequently, the Hausa settlers demean the indigenous people whom they view as rural and inferior.⁴⁹⁴

Still, some respondents claimed that many indigenes were lazy and badly affected by an insatiable desire for the consumption of alcohol. Consequently, they were envious of the achievement of settlers in their midst and this usually gave context to the conflicts. According to Sanusi:

Many indigenes see the economic power of the state to be in the hands of the non-indigenes, namely, the Hausa, Yoruba and Ibo. They don’t ask why these people are leading in commerce. Is it not because they work for it? So they [indigenes] are

⁴⁹¹ FGD, Jos, 28/3/07.

⁴⁹² Sanusi, Jos, 16/2/07.

⁴⁹³ Interview with Mallam Mohammed Hashir Sa’id (President of the Muslim Student Society of Nigeria, Plateau Unit), Jos, 19/2/07.

⁴⁹⁴ See Danfulani, *Indigene/Settler*, 3

jealous of non-indigenes with big cars and houses. After all, we are the owners of the cars. What prevents you from doing the same- riding cars, buying houses and owning supermarkets instead of using your money just to drink?⁴⁹⁵

Some interviewees however denied any envy of the settlers by the indigenes. Kevin captured the views of most indigenous respondents on this issue when he said:

We [indigenes] are not envious of the Hausa-Fulani or any settler group. In fact we lived together in peace for many years and Jos was known as 'Home of Peace'. However, the Hausa-Fulani settlers are trying to claim indigenization in the state, which is not done anywhere. What we are saying is that while settlers cannot be denied participation in the politics and social allowances of their domicile, the degree of participation must be streamlined and settlers should stay clear of matters considered ancestry to the people of the state.⁴⁹⁶

Thus, Kevin, while addressing the matter of envy of the settlers' economic successes, brings in the issue of the politics of indigenization in the Jos conflict. Indigenization is used as a major criterion for inclusion and exclusion within the political arena. I shall briefly present how some respondents saw politics as one of the causes of the conflict.

Politics

The political dimension to the conflict featured prominently. As mentioned above, attempts to hold to political power between the indigenes and the Hausa settlers had led to various problems in the past; much before the conflict under investigation. Most interviewees therefore referred to the antecedents of the rejection of the Muslim chairman for Jos North LGA and the *Jasawa* NAPEP chairman, which were political offices. According to Sa'id, "When the NAPEP leader was appointed; he was considered a Muslim and non-indigene and prevented from going into the office. The Muslims were aggrieved and it almost brought crisis."⁴⁹⁷ The divide in each case was both ethnic and religious, since most of the indigenes are Christians and most of the Hausa/Fulani settlers are Muslims. Also, the issues of the Sardauna and the emirate system which were mentioned above are intrinsically political and religious. According to Sheikh Marshi,

⁴⁹⁵ Sanusi, Jos, 16/2/07.

⁴⁹⁶ Kevin, Jos, 10/1/2007.

⁴⁹⁷ Sa'id, Jos, 19/02/07.

I will say that politics brought the problem. My ancestors came to Jos over 100 years ago. I am a Hausa man born in Jos in 1955. I went to a Mission school where prayers were not forced on Muslim children in our days. I went to school on government scholarship up to Master's degree under Solomon Lar. At that time there was no discrimination against Muslims. But in 1999, when in Plateau state we had Christian-Christian ticket, the administration stopped the rights of Muslims. Now every head of parastatal in the state is a Christian. I am therefore a Plateau indigene with 15 children, but my children cannot claim being from the state. Right now I have no place to go other than Plateau State. This crisis was therefore a political and not a religious crisis.⁴⁹⁸

For Marshi therefore, there is no doubt that he had lived all his life in Jos and he sees Jos as home. And because he had received a government scholarship through the Plateau State government while his fifteen children were denied, the political factor was the most crucial explanation of the conflict for him. By "Christian-Christian ticket", Marshi meant that in the 1999 elections, both the governor of the state and his deputy were Christians.⁴⁹⁹

Government Lapses

One factor which came up among the causes of the Jos conflict concerned administrative lapses on the part of government. First, government was accused of lacking security consciousness. Respondents opined that government had been aware of rising tensions between Christians and Muslims all along and there ought to have been preparation on the ground for rapid response to the crisis. However, the crisis went on from September 7 to 12, 2001, with 'silent' killings going on after the main violence of the first two days.⁵⁰⁰ Also, it was said that the absence of government security agents gave room for false information to be disseminated around town, which made people to be confused and to act in ignorance in their neighbourhoods.⁵⁰¹ This particular blame on the government does not sound strange because in almost every crisis, government security agents are blamed for being lackadaisical. Second, government lapses were seen on the issues of street blockade during *Jumaat* prayers and the 'location' of the Congo-Russia mosque. The mosque

⁴⁹⁸ Adamu, Jos, 20/2/07.

⁴⁹⁹ Before the creation of Nassarawa State out of Plateau, there used to be Christian-Muslim ticket in the state's political game plan.

⁵⁰⁰ Kevin, Jos, 10/1/07.

⁵⁰¹ Salihu, Jos, on 14/2/07.

was said to have begun as a 'house' mosque and sited very close to the only access road to Congo-Russia, when approaching from the busy Bauchi road. In a passionate tone on the matter, Maisamari said:

What is the JMDB [Jos Metropolitan Development Board] for? Are they not the ones to approve building plans? When this mosque was constructed in that place [pointing], without any provision for vehicles and *okadas* [motorcycles] to park, why was it approved? Who gave the approval for the closure of a road which has no alternative? See, there is only one main road into all this area [pointing] and that is the road which they were always closing on Fridays. Therefore, all people in the area would have to wait for them to finish their prayers before passing. Why should JMDB permit that? And it is not in this area alone. This kind of road blockade must stop everywhere in the city. In fact, even the mosque was built on a gutter. It is a drainage passage that was used to site the mosque. Who permitted such? The people who permitted that building for Jumaat prayers were the cause of this problem. That is why it has been reverted to just the normal mosque, no longer for Jumaat prayers. And that is also why closing this road has stopped.⁵⁰²

The issue of government officials not performing their duties as expected is a matter of public concern. Most people believe this happens when such government officials are influenced with money. And because of their greed, they alter environmental designs to suit those who wrongfully patronize them and try to defend their action. According to Dalyop, when the people in the area wrote against the road blockade, the then military governor, who was also a Muslim, arranged for soldiers to be guarding the mosque on Fridays in order to ensure that the blockade was uninterrupted. This silenced the people and the issues of the blockade emerged again only when democratic rule was restored.⁵⁰³

Some respondents opined that the lapses of government are also in the area of the constitution, hence, involving matters of justice. They felt that if the government had seriously taken up the settler/indigene issues constitutionally, ensuring that it was equally handled across the country, the conflict of Jos would not have happened. Therefore trying to do something in Jos which is not done in other parts of the country is an act of injustice. According to Golam:

No person can claim another state in Nigeria, unless fraudulently and [state] government has the right to deny people who are not of the state. That is how it is done all over the country. Every state is allocated with limited resources and ways

⁵⁰² Maisamari, Jos, 14/2//07.

⁵⁰³ Dalyop, Jos, 16/2/07

must be sought to manage such resources well. Why should Plateau State be different? Can I get scholarship in Borno or any other Northern State? So, there is need to constitutionally handle the issue of indigenization.⁵⁰⁴

And yet the Hausa settlers are also asking for justice to be done. According to Adamu, a politician (leader) should accept all the people once in office, whether they voted him in or not. He believed that no one decides his tribe or where he is born. People therefore deserve justice where they live. He said that some people who are categorized as settlers in Jos do not know any other home than Jos. He argued that even if people are a minority group in any state, their interests must be protected.⁵⁰⁵

The issue of impunity also came up as part of government's conspicuous ineptitude. It is believed that if the government had been applying the rule of law on people involved in religious conflicts in the past, the Jos conflict would not have taken place.⁵⁰⁶ According to Sanusi, "The Government should make sure there are no sacred cows. Disobedient people must be brought to book. The government should give everybody his due need. Justice and equity must prevail and we should love our country and stop destroying it."⁵⁰⁷ Golam also said: "Those who are behind the killings and destruction of property should be arrested and tried. They always arrest the wrong persons, sparing those who sent them."⁵⁰⁸ Further, Nwachukwu noted that perpetrators of violence must be brought to book. He asked where the people were, who funded the crisis and argued that without strong people backing the *almajiri* and other hoodlums, they could not just go and kill and destroy. Therefore, when they are arrested, they should be made to mention who their leaders are.⁵⁰⁹ If government applies the rule of law on all offenders, it is believed that similar conflicts would be prevented or minimized. Similarly, there has been a call to outlaw carrying knives

⁵⁰⁴ Golam, Jos, 22/3/07.

⁵⁰⁵ Adamu, Jos, 20/2/07.

⁵⁰⁶ Nwachukwu, Jos, 23/2/07.

⁵⁰⁷ Sanusi, Jos, 16/2/07.

⁵⁰⁸ Golam, Jos, 22/3/07.

⁵⁰⁹ Nwachukwu, Jos, 23/2/07.

about. It was said that the sight of knives which the youths at the Congo-Russia mosque were carrying aggravated the violence.⁵¹⁰

There were other issues raised as the cause of the Jos conflict, although not in the strong terms of the factors mentioned above. Some spoke on the issues of general lack of education and ignorance of one's religious tenets while others spoke on the need for proper cultural upbringing of children. FGD members said that the conflict was caused by lack of prayer by Christians and Muslims, lack of doing projects or programmes together (as Christians and Muslims), lack of emphasis on the need to live together in harmony, lack of coming together as communities, lack of a patriotic spirit, selfishness, materialism and inordinate hunger for power.

From the above, one can appreciate the fact that the Jos conflict was quite complex and was caused by a combination of factors. Going by the factors given above, there is no doubt about overlaps in explanation. There are times when two factors are operating so much side-by-side that separating them is almost impossible. However, it is my argument in this thesis that despite the varying causes of the Jos conflict, my exploration shows that religion was the most dominant factor. This was confirmed by the depth of information supplied by respondents even in the classifications done through the computer software. However, apart from their in-depth information on the religious factor, both Christian and Muslim interviewees associated the issue of religion with ethnicity, economy, politics and government lapses. This agrees with my suggestion in chapter one that religious conflict in Nigeria can be understood against the background of the 'eclectic theory'.

Manifestations of the conflict

After ascertaining their understanding of the cause of the conflict, the next question to my interviewees was to explore the course of the conflict. Although newspapers and reports contain some accounts of how the conflict manifested, it was important to be informed through the lived experience of the people. Both Muslim and Christian interviewees explained the manifestations of the conflicts almost similarly. The Jos conflict involved the loss of many lives, permanent disabilities, injuries and

⁵¹⁰ Maissamari, Jos, 14/2/07.

the destruction of property. There was a free for all use of all kinds of weapons of warfare. Guns, clubs, machetes, spears, knives, stones, bows and arrows, locally prepared bombs and just any available tool were used by both Muslims and Christians. Pointing to a house near hers, Dalyop of Congo-Russia said: "That upstairs was set ablaze in the night as all the people in this area had run to the Police Station and the Church. A set of beautiful female twins that I knew well were burnt to ashes in the house."⁵¹¹

Also, both Muslims and Christians accused each other of using camouflage army uniforms to fight for the interest of their group. It was reported that many 'real' soldiers were killed by those who disguised in army uniform before the ruse was detected. The bodies of some of the people killed were thrown into streams and many dead bodies littered the streets. Soldiers also harassed people who were in sight and used foul language to address them.⁵¹² Adamu, the proprietor of the *Albayan Islamic School* arrived in his school and found the dead body of his security guard at the gate. Marshi, on the other hand, in the company of other leaders, prayed over more than 280 corpses in the Central Mosque alone. Again, he saw a soldier killing a 62 year old man in *Nassarawa Filin Ball*, who posed no threat to the soldier.⁵¹³ In the same vein, Rev Nwachukwu said he lost count of the number of people that were buried as interdenominational Christian services were held and sometimes people just arranged to bury their relations themselves.⁵¹⁴ The role of young people and the *almajiris* was quite significant in the carnage. Some of them were said to be under the influence of drugs. Also, students on a summer course prevented hoodlums from entering the St. Louis College in Jos.⁵¹⁵

Besides killing, many people sustained permanent disabilities. A 72 years' old member of the FGD said:

Some wild young men who had taken drugs hit me with a big stone on this leg [pointing to the leg]. I fell down and could no longer run. They left me in a pool of

⁵¹¹ Ibid.

⁵¹² Kevin, Jos, 10/1/2007.

⁵¹³ Marshi, Jos, 16/2/07.

⁵¹⁴ Nwachukwu, Jos, 23/2/07.

⁵¹⁵ Golam, 22/3/07

blood and I was later taken to a local orthopaedic doctor between 5.00 and 7.00 pm. I stayed there for six days before returning home. Up till now I am taking treatment.⁵¹⁶

His friend in the FGD alluded to the leg as *shegiyar kafa*, an indication that it was a leg that defied healing.

Further, thousands of structures including houses, shops, church buildings, mosques, markets, and vehicles were set ablaze, sometimes with people inside. Notable among those buildings were the parish house of the Catholic Cathedral, the Tudun Wada Market and the Jos Ultra Modern Market, which was believed to be the commercial nerve of the state and the biggest market in West Africa.⁵¹⁷ The burning of this market is believed to have affected the entire nation adversely. Marshi laments this havoc:

The worst was the burning down of the market. The strength to build the Mosque and Church has been crippled. The market is a means of reaching all. We don't know who did it, but I believe both Muslims and Christians were involved in the burning down of the market.⁵¹⁸

It is significant to see how the Christian-Muslim drama continues to unfold. While the prevailing opinion on the burning of the market blamed either Christians or Muslims alone, Murshi holds that both Muslims and Christians were involved in this havoc. In my view, the importance of the Jos market to the economic life of Plateau State makes its destruction deserve a separate study.

Most of the atrocities went on concurrently. As killings were taking place, properties were being burnt and people were looting houses, shops and markets. There was confusion and people ran helter-skelter. Many were traumatized and cases of rape were reported. According to Nwachukwu:

There were also other vices. At that time I was doing a programme at the University of Jos. A University don who was serving as the Director of Student Affairs told us how the students residing in Angwan Rogo were attacked. Some of the students were killed by Islamic extremists and many of the girls who escaped death were raped. One morning, as he was returning from the main campus, he picked some

⁵¹⁶ FGD, Jos (Mohammed Ibrahim) Jos, 28/3/07.

⁵¹⁷ The market was not immediately burnt. However, when it was finally burnt, it was linked with this conflict.

⁵¹⁸ Marshi, Jos, 16/2/07

ladies [in his car] who had arrived the night before from a journey, unaware of what was happening in Jos. They stayed all night at the motor park on Bauchi road where they were all mercilessly raped before morning. This of course has consequences for HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.⁵¹⁹

As shown above, some of the lived experiences of the respondents include the information passed across during the conflict. As they were part of the story, they also told and heard stories of the conflict. From the above, one can see that the experiences of the people gave room to various kinds of responses and there is no doubt that the conflict posits a major challenge to the pastoral care of the Church. Victims of such crisis offer the Church an enormous ground for taking practical steps towards the transformation of their lived experiences. In this case, victims must include all who have lived through this experience of conflict. And although the Church itself is a victim, it also must be involved in its pastoral calling for the transformation of society.

Ending of the Conflict

There were several versions to how the conflict came to an end. First, things appeared to die down in the afternoon on Friday (7/9/04) when the police eventually arrived at the scene. However, the conflict took a new dimension when killing and burning down of properties began in the midnight on the same Friday. By Saturday morning, soldiers had taken cover in many places and with sophisticated ammunition; they began to arrest the fake soldiers. They expressed sadness at the amount of killing that had taken place before their arrival.⁵²⁰

But it was not soldiers alone that contributed to the ending of the conflict. Usually, when there are conflicts in Nigeria, many religious leaders, due to their great influence over their followers, are involved in negotiating peace. Some interviewees mentioned the role of the Archbishop of the Catholic Church, who made efforts on Saturday to get in touch with Abuja. Also, he opened up the Catholic Pastoral Centre to all who were displaced, Christians and Muslims alike. The 'Centre' became a safety ground for people in Jenta Adamu area and free food was provided for all throughout the period. The Archbishop was said to have spoken to appease the

⁵¹⁹ Nwachukwu, Jos, 23/2/07.

⁵²⁰ Maisamari, Jos, 14/2/07.

people in the area and this made the crisis there to stop.⁵²¹ Sheikh Adamu said: “Religious leaders stood firmly to end the crisis. Pastors and Imams went together from place to place to appeal to people to live in peace”.⁵²² In the same vein, Golam said: “Religious leaders, both Muslims and Christians; moved from one place to another, campaigning for calmness; gathering people, and talking to them.”⁵²³

In Congo-Russia, where the conflict actually started, some elderly Muslims who had lived in the area for a very long time were said to have met with Christian leaders to appeal for the restoration of peace. They told the Christians that they did not have a hand in the violence and explained how they had enjoyed the hospitality of the indigenes, ever since they came into the area. After their meeting with the pastors, the Christian youth leaders in the area were summoned and charged to speak to their group to discontinue the violence.⁵²⁴ Thus, the crisis subsided in Congo-Russia through the collaboration of community leaders, religious leaders and youths.

Quite notably, there were some areas where violence never took place at all. Sanusi said in Nyan Shanu, where he lived, the Christians and Muslims agreed to protect one another. Instead of fighting each other, they formed a joint security unit to defend the area from attack by hooligans. He said he hid Christians in his house, who were fleeing for safety.⁵²⁵ Members of the FGD also said that youths in Dadin-Kowa, both Christians and Muslims, through the influence of some respected community leaders, prevented the conflict from extending to their area. They teamed together to resist any outside influence that could ignite troubles between them.⁵²⁶

Consequences of the Jos Conflict

Expectedly, the aftermaths of the conflict were devastating for Jos in various ways. Respondents spoke extensively about fears, suspicion and mutual distrust between Christians and Muslims in the city after the conflict. These are to be expected where

⁵²¹ Kevin, Jos, 10/1/2007. Golam also gave this information about the Archbishop.

⁵²² Adamu, Jos, 20/2/07.

⁵²³ Golam, Jos, 22/3/07.

⁵²⁴ Dalyop, Jos, 16/2/07.

⁵²⁵ Sanusi, Jos, 16/2/07.

⁵²⁶ FGD, Jos, 28/03/07.

there was a huge loss of lives and destruction of property. And although there were so many issues brought up on the aftermath of the conflict in Jos, only the most prevalent ones are here mentioned.

First, it was reported that dangerous weapons had become more accessible to people living in the town in preparation for future re-occurrence. Even people who had not thought of keeping such dangerous weapons in the past were said to have reconsidered their position. In some cases respondents stated that both mosques and churches had become mini armouries for possible defence/attack in the future. In other cases, the weapons used during the crises were said to be used now for armed robbery. Also, the weapons included indigenous 'charms' which are believed to be more potent in warfare than the conventional ammunitions. This dangerous trend is definitely a preparation for increased hostility and all stake holders, particularly religious leaders, have a great role in ensuring that it discontinues.

Second, the conflict led to broken relationship and general mistrust between many Christians and Muslims who had enjoyed a relatively good relationship with each other before. Sheikh Marshi captured the situation succinctly:

The worst thing which the conflict has brought is the lack of trust for one another in all places. People now no longer trust their close friends or staff in the same office, so long as they belong to a different religion. Everyone moves with suspicion of the other. No society can be built in this spirit of mutual suspicion.⁵²⁷

Therefore hostile societies have been created due to mutual suspicion and fear. And to express the level of bitterness which the people still had for one another, a female member of the FGD said: "I can never trust them again. These were people who were so wicked that they killed their neighbours who ran to them for refuge."⁵²⁸ According to her, a brother of hers who ran to a Muslim neighbour for safety was killed. Therefore, families who lost their relations found it hard to forgive the people of the 'other' religion. Discord, disaffection and estrangement with each other were prominent aftermaths associated with families that incurred losses in the conflict. Adamu also contributed to the issue of the broken relationship as follows:

⁵²⁷ Marshi, Jos, 18/2/07.

⁵²⁸ FGD, Jos, 28/3/07.

I had grown up in the house of Mr Peter Gowon, a Christian here in Jos. I had good relationship with Christians, but this became lost due to the conflict. In the past there were intermarriages between Muslims and Christians, but this situation has since changed.⁵²⁹

Third, an unhealthy development which was confirmed by respondents and which I observed in Jos was the relocation/resettlement of people in the various communities along religious divides. It is now believed that if one lives among people of the 'other' religion, one automatically jeopardises one's safety in times of conflicts. In the course of the research, I went to Apata area in the night to patronize a popular local cafeteria which used to be run by an old Muslim woman. When I got there, I could not recognize the place anymore. After enquiring about the cafeteria, I was informed that all Muslims moved away from the place after the conflict and that it had become an entirely Christian settlement. Interviewees said that Christians moved out of Angwan Rogo, Gengere, Dilimi and Rikkos and those places have become predominantly Muslim settlements. Also, Muslims moved out of Apata, Janta Adamu, part of Tudun Wada and Hwolshe, and these areas of the town have become predominantly Christian settlements. According to Marshi, some Christians and Muslims even negotiated the exchange of their homes in order to move to where adherents of their faith lived.⁵³⁰

Fourth, the conflict led to a weakened economy. The economic situation made life almost unbearable for many people as bread winners in some homes had been killed and shops, properties and other means of livelihood had been destroyed. Almost all respondents mentioned the economic distress caused by the burning down of the Jos Ultra Modern Market. This made many businesses to be relocated to other parts of the country. Respondents also indicated that potential investors were avoiding Jos and preferring more peaceful states in the country. These have brought an increase in hunger, suffering and the poverty level.⁵³¹

Fifth, there were social and moral decadence as a result of the conflict. For instance, many young people, particularly ladies, took to prostitution as a means of survival in the midst of the prevalent poverty, thus expanding the HIV/AIDS pandemic in the

⁵²⁹ Adamu, Jos, 20/2/07.

⁵³⁰ Marshi, Jos, 18/2/07.

community. Young men, on the other hand, became stuck with drugs, which were ostensibly consumed by both Muslim and Christian youths during the conflict. As already mentioned, the accessibility to dangerous weapons increased the crime rate of the city, particularly armed robbery by youths.⁵³²

Sixth, families were destabilized by the conflict. One of the women in the FGD mentioned how the conflict had badly affected families, particularly women, thus: “We the women are the worst hit. We lost our husbands and our sons in the conflict. Our families are now permanently fragmented.”⁵³³ Buttressing the pain of the women, another woman in the FGD spoke about many children in the area that were lost in the crisis. According to her, in the midst of the confusion, several parents who ran away left their children and had not found them ever since, whether alive or dead.⁵³⁴

Seventh, the conflict led to a greater bonding of each religious group. This was one of the issues I least expected from the research. I had thought of the conflict as producing merely negative results, but my findings showed that there were some benefits for the religious groups despite the incalculable losses. Some vivid outcomes of the conflict were the stronger ‘ecumenism’ and “spirituality” noticed among Muslims and Christians as reported by respondents. While Catholics, Protestants, Pentecostals, A.I.C.’s and major Christian denominations came together as one, the various Sunni brotherhoods and Shiite Muslims also united themselves as one. Activities of religious organizations like CAN and JNI became more prominent. Also, exhibitions of devoutness followed the conflicts, such as conspicuous prayers, worship and benevolence, different from other times.⁵³⁵ This clearly shows that religious bonding and ‘spirituality’ can be significantly noticed when a common adversary is found in the ‘other’ religious group.

⁵³¹ Adamu, Jos, 20/2/07

⁵³² Marshi, Jos, 18/2/07.

⁵³³ FGD, Jos, 28/3/07.

⁵³⁴ Ibid.

⁵³⁵ Nwachukwu, Jos, 23/2/07.

Eighth, the conflict revealed the people's aspiration and potential towards achieving peace. Various stake holders were involved, not only in putting an end to the immediate conflict situations, but in discussions on ways forward after the conflicts. Several meetings were held and representatives of groups were constantly involved in "peace building" meetings and conferences. Among the stake holders were government agencies, security forces, traditional rulers, community leaders, religious leaders, and NGOs. According to Kevin:

To prevent a repetition of the crisis, the peace committee set up needs to continue to work. It is not to wait till there is crisis. Several efforts have been made to ensure that there is peace. These peace efforts should continue. You can see that both Muslims and Christians want peace. The way in which each group has been responding to called meetings shows. These peace efforts must be sustained.⁵³⁶

People's aspiration for peace was also revealed through the kind of wishes and prayers they expressed about the conflict. Both Christians and Muslims were quick to say it was the work of the devil and prayed each time that God would not allow the devil to have such a chance again. Both Christians and Muslims appeared to be afraid of another outbreak of violence, which was contrary to speculations that some religious groups found joy in bloodshed. Marshi captured the general views thus:

The conflict was very devastating. The town was ugly. Hope was lost and there was neighbourhood enmity...The crisis did not solve but aggravate problems and made the times dark. We pray that such will never occur again.⁵³⁷

From the above, it is my view that the people of Jos, both Muslims and Christians, have the desire to live together in peace and harmony.

Religious Teaching on Living with People of the Other Religion

The question concerning the teachings of Islam and Christianity was asked to ascertain how the people understood their religion and how they correlated it with the conflict. It was to explore the people's perception of the kind of life that could promote peaceful co-existence on the basis of the teachings of their religions. In this section I have divided the responses according to the religions of the interviewees since the conflict basically involved Christians and Muslims. I shall begin with the responses provided by the Muslims.

⁵³⁶ Kevin, Jos, 10/1/07.

⁵³⁷ Marshi, Jos, 18/2/07.

The Muslim interviewees premised the relationship between the teaching of their faith and the conflict on their understanding of the Qur'an and the Hadith, especially the words of Prophet Mohammed.

First, Islam teaches the brotherhood of mankind based on the belief in the Fatherhood of God. According to Sa'id, Islam upholds brotherhood on the level of humanity and also on the level of faith. Therefore, although there is a special brotherhood of all Muslims, every human being is also one's brother and one is not to shed the blood of another. Rather, one is to live with fellow humans in peace.⁵³⁸

Second, Islam teaches good neighbourliness with people, not just with those from one's house. Sa'id further said:

A neighbour is whoever beliefs in Allah and the last day. You should respect your neighbour because you will be asked about your neighbour. God will ask you on how you have treated your neighbour, whether with acceptance or rejection. Neighbours are persons who are 40 houses from all sides around one, irrespective of their religion.⁵³⁹

Adamu explains further that in Islam, there are three kinds of neighbours and God expects the Muslim to live peacefully with them. There are nearby neighbours who are blood relations. There are distant relations who are not blood relations but relations by religion. There is also neighbourliness with animals. He said in Islam there are laws concerning everything.

Again, Sanusi says that both the Qur'an and the Hadith teach that a Muslim should be good to his neighbours, whether Muslim or Christian or other. He said that the prophet did not pay back wrongs done to him. Islam rather teaches that one should help people that cannot pay one back, including the unknown stranger. A Muslim is to rejoice with people of other religions and to encourage them in their sorrows. He gave an example of himself thus:

For instance, I have an Islamic school here in Jos, but the teachers are not all Muslims. I have many Christian teachers there and in fact, most of my very good teachers are Christians. This is how we should accept one another. Right now, the suspicion is reducing. You know that healing is gradual. To build is difficult but to destroy is easy.⁵⁴⁰

⁵³⁸ Sa'id, Jos, 19/2/07.

⁵³⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁰ Sanusi, Jos, 16/2/07

Several examples of how neighbourliness was exemplified by Prophet Mohammed were mentioned.

Third, Islam teaches peace. Adamu asserts that God expects Muslims to live peacefully with their neighbours. He said that Islamic teachings are very detailed and that there are even laws concerning using the road with fellow human beings. If a person is passing beside a Muslim, the Muslim is expected to respect the person and greet him as a mark of pursuing peace. If a person greets a Muslim, he is to answer. He gave an instance of when Umar, the second Caliph, overthrew Jerusalem. Umar gave a portion of the mosque to Christians to worship God in order that he might promote peace.

Further, Marshi said that the Prophet taught and exemplified hospitality. He ate with Jews and Christians and they lived together in the spirit of harmony. Islam, he said, teaches that Muslims can marry Christian women and they can also eat the meat of animals slaughtered by Christians in Jesus' name. He emphasized that the Qur'an teaches that Christians are the closest neighbours and friends of Muslims and therefore they are to live peacefully together.⁵⁴¹ According to Adamu, Christians and Muslims were friends in the beginning, whereas Jews and pagans used to be enemies of Muslims.⁵⁴² Again, a member of the FGD recalled words of the Qur'an which enjoins Muslims to be friends with 'the people of the book' and these are Christians and Jews.

On violence, Marshi and Adamu said that the Qur'an teaches that every Muslim should fear violence, because when it begins, it affects both the guilty and the innocent alike. Also, whoever elicits violence is cursed in the Qur'an.⁵⁴³ And going back to the account of Cain and Abel in the Qur'an, Sa'id emphasized that Islam discourages conflicts of all kinds and considers violence as the quality of hypocrites. But not only is violence to be shunned, one is expected to do good to even those who are treating one badly. He recalled an instance about Mohammed's youthful days in

⁵⁴¹ Marshi, Jos, 18/2/07.

⁵⁴² Adamu, Jos, 20/2/07.

⁵⁴³ Ibid.

Medina. At that time he had Jewish and Christian neighbours who hated him and regularly poured refuse on him. One day he heard that a particular boy who was among those pouring refuse on him was sick and he visited him. This, he said, is a great teaching on how a Muslim is to treat even those who maltreat him.⁵⁴⁴ Sanusi also said that in his adulthood, Mohammed had many converts on the basis of how he treated those who were enemies to him. “When people insulted him, he did not insult back. His big companions were converted to Islam because of his kindness and character. Islam means peace and any Muslim fighting is only protecting his interest, not Islam. According to Islam, merely looking at one’s neighbour with haughty eyes is wrong.”⁵⁴⁵ To this, Salihu also lent a voice on Prophet Mohammed:

There was a time when Mohammed was misrepresented and labelled a bad boy to be avoided. One day a woman had asked him to help her put load on her head. But instead of putting it on her head, he put it on his own head and took the load to her house. The lady tried to pay him but he refused the pay. The woman thereafter warned him against listening to a boy called Mohammed. He told her he was Mohammed. There and then she accepted Islam.⁵⁴⁶

Quite interestingly, all the five Muslims on the one-to-one interview in Jos emphasized either explicitly or implicitly, the call of Islam to show hospitality to all people. This rhetoric on hospitality was a high point in their emphasis. Also, a member of the FGD buttressed it thus: “I am to take care of the sick and welcome the stranger in my home, Christian or Muslim. That is the teaching of my religion, to receive all people in need irrespective of their religion or language.” Accordingly, Adamu said that a Muslim should not be satisfied if he is full while his neighbours are hungry. A Muslim is expected to feed the hungry and open his doors for those who have not. It is wrong for everyone to be suffering while one person has everything. A Muslim must therefore open his house to the poor and needy. These are definitely elements of the concept of hospitality coming out dominantly from the field of research. Again, another FGD member said: “As a Muslim, I am expected to help my neighbour and never to harm him. All that we are seeing happening today

⁵⁴⁴ Sa’id, Jos, 19/2/07.

⁵⁴⁵ Sanusi, Jos, 16/2/07.

⁵⁴⁶ Salihu, Jos, 14/2/07.

are not according to the teaching of Islam. Islam means peace and we are expected to show peace and live in peace with all people, regardless of their religion.”⁵⁴⁷

Christians who were interviewed based the relationship between the teaching of their faith and the conflict on their understanding of the teachings of the Bible, especially the words and deeds of Jesus Christ. According to Golam:

“As a Christian, the Bible teaches me to live in love with all. All mankind was created in God’s image and I am to love all people, in spite of their religion. The Bible teaches me to show kindness indiscriminately and to love my neighbour as myself. Jesus taught us to even love our enemies and to live in peace with all.” All the five Christians interviewed mentioned that the one main expectation of a Christian is to love the Lord with all of one’s mind, soul and strength and to love one’s neighbour as one’s self. They therefore affirmed that their faith was opposed to the conflict that took place and all the bitter experiences that went along with it. A woman from the FGD put it succinctly: “As a Christian, the Bible teaches me to love my neighbour as myself. I am to be a Good Samaritan to everyone in need. I am not to show partiality but to show love. The basic feature of any child of God is love. The Bible says that God is love and he who abides in love abides in God and God in him.”⁵⁴⁸

Rev Nwachukwu went a little further in his connection of his faith to the conflict by saying:

I will summarise what my religion teaches in two injunctions from Jesus. He said that Christians should be gentle as a dove and wise as a serpent. In our gentility, we are to love our neighbours as ourselves and even love our enemies. In our wisdom, we must continue to resist whatever will take away our rights as Nigerians, including the right to live. Gone are the days when Christians will just fold their hands and be slaughtered with kitchen knives. We must resist infringement on our rights as bona fide Nigerians.⁵⁴⁹

In other words, while Christians should love their neighbours, particularly the Muslims with whom they were involved in this conflict, Nwachukwu would not want

⁵⁴⁷ FGD, Jos, 28/3/07.

⁵⁴⁸ FGD, Jos, 28/3/07.

⁵⁴⁹ Nwachukwu, Jos, 23/2/07.

it to be done at the risk of extinction. He therefore was advocating for ‘gentility’ and ‘wisdom’ in the matters of relationship with Muslims.

Similarly, Kevin expresses his faith in relation to the conflict as follows:

For me, I still believe we must be gentle as doves but wise as serpents. You cannot actually know what a Muslim is planning and we must try to stop them from taking us unawares. We will be praying but the Bible says: ‘watch and pray’.⁵⁵⁰

There is no doubt that both Nwachukwu and Kevin are handling the conflict with kid gloves. Their approach to scriptures appears to be indicative of a prolonged lived experience which they would not want to see repeated. The same goes for Dalyop who says “We have resumed our friendship but I am now more careful than before. It is important that one learns from experiences around one and this one is not an exception.”⁵⁵¹

The Christian interviewees in Jos also stressed the call of God to every Christian to practice forgiveness. Dalyop said: “We are taught to forgive all those who wrong us, whether big or small. And since on the cross Jesus forgave those who crucified Him, Christians are expected to forgive those who wrong them.” She said that after the crisis, many of her Muslim friends came to see her and to find out about her welfare. She also returned their visit and thanked them for their care and love. She stressed that it is friendship rather enmity that is expected of Christians and their neighbours.⁵⁵²

Emphasis was made on the Lord’s Prayer in which one is to ask for forgiveness of trespasses in accordance with how one has forgiven others. Therefore, every Christian is expected to forgive and to accept others with the love of Christ. It was repeatedly said that the subject matter of ‘forgiveness’ was the dominant theme of most church services in the first few months after the conflict.⁵⁵³

Golam emphasized the importance of hospitality as a way of relationship with Muslims instead of conflict. Both Golam and Kevin (as already mentioned) spoke

⁵⁵⁰ Kevin, Jos, 10/1/07.

⁵⁵¹ Dalyop, Jos, 16/2/07

⁵⁵² Ibid.

⁵⁵³ Kevin, Jos, 10/1/07.

alike on the hospitality of Archbishop Kaigama of the Catholic Church of Jos. Golam's version goes thus:

Although the Pastoral Centre belongs to the Church, it accommodated both Muslims and Christians. Food was given to both Muslims and Christians who were homeless. There was no discrimination and many people were surprised. That spirit of hospitality is what is expected of me as a Christian. Right now we do a lot of ministration to people in the hospitals and prisons and you know it is not only Christians that are there. We minister to them all in the name of Christ and that is how we are to live with Muslims in the country.⁵⁵⁴

According to Maisamari, his Christian faith teaches him that Christians and Muslims should cooperate with each other in order to live in peace and to make Nigeria a better place. He asserts that his religion teaches him to welcome everyone, even the unknown stranger and to help people, not because they will help him back. He called attention to the story of the Good Samaritan and said that Christians are to be like the Samaritan to Muslims. Instead of all the discord and killings, Christians are supposed to help the Muslims when they are in need and this in turn will bring progress to the society.⁵⁵⁵ Going by the above contributions of Kelvin, Golam and Maisamari on hospitality, one can safely say that three of the five Christian respondents in the one-on-one interviews mentioned the issue of hospitality. And because the five Muslim interviewees earlier discussed had mentioned or alluded to the of subject hospitality, one can securely say that out of the ten people who were interviewed on the one-on-one basis in Jos, eight of them spoke on the indispensability of hospitality.

The Maiduguri Conflict of February 18, 2006.

In September, 2005, the Danish newspaper, *Jollands-Posten*, created the furore over depictions of Mohammed by publishing a series of 12 cartoon drawings. This was after a local author, Kare Bluitgen, complained he could not find any artist brave enough or willing to depict images of Mohammed for his upcoming illustrated book about the prophet. The publication of the images by this press was condemned around the Islamic world and it led to the burning of embassies and a boycott of Denmark and its products by many Muslim nations. In the ensuing pandemonium,

⁵⁵⁴ Golam, Jos, 22/3/07.

⁵⁵⁵ Maisamari, Jos, 14/2/07.

the original book was forgotten although it was eventually released, featuring Mohammed's depictions page after page.⁵⁵⁶

Muslims all over the world, regardless of persuasions and orders, saw the publication as blasphemous and reacted in various ways in its condemnation. Consequently a rally was organized by Muslims in Maiduguri on February 18, 2006, six months after the publication, to protest this 'Danish Cartoon'. This metamorphosed into an attack on Christians in the city, leading to the loss of lives of about 50 Christians and destruction of property. Among persons killed was Rev Father Michael Gajere, the parish priest of St Rita Catholic Church Bulumkutu.⁵⁵⁷ Property destroyed included businesses and premises belonging to Christians and 56 church buildings. The carnage took place between the hours of 10.00 a.m. and 3.00 p.m. on the fateful Saturday amidst the chanting of Islamic slogans. Petrol bombs, clubs and knives were openly utilized in brutalizing Christians and reducing their property to ashes. The occurrence of the assault all over the city has left Christians in no doubt of a pre-arranged attack.⁵⁵⁸ According to Abubakar, even though similar protests occurred in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Indonesia, Syria, Somalia, Lebanon and Iran, Nigeria "recorded the highest casualties" and blame for the crisis was heaped on hoodlums, miscreants and thugs.⁵⁵⁹ However, the popular perception emanating from my interviews was that Christians were largely attacked by Muslims without visible evidence of retaliation.

Immediate Causes of the Conflict

According to Rabi Ado, the crisis followed a lecture delivered at a rally which held at the *Ramat Square* by the Borno Muslim Forum titled: "Personality of Prophet Muhammad". The event, which was meant to last for about three hours, started peacefully and got to the last stage of prayers for the unity of the country and the

⁵⁵⁶ See [file:///C:/Documents and Settings/Administrator/Desktop/Danish Cartoon.htm](file:///C:/Documents%20and%20Settings/Administrator/Desktop/Danish%20Cartoon.htm) , 4/18/2007.

⁵⁵⁷ <http://news.daylightonline.com/2005-03/Maiduguri.html> . See "218" Commemoration Programme, Maiduguri, February 15-18, 2007.

⁵⁵⁸ CAN, "Memorandum By Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) on the Maiduguri Civil Disturbance of 18th February, 2006 to the High Powered Administrative Committee of Inquiry", 6-8.

⁵⁵⁹ MS Abubakar, *Religious Extremism as A National Security Problem: Strategies for Sustainable Solutions*, NIPSS, Kuru, September 2006, 46-47.

condemnation of the blasphemous cartoon when troubles began. She opined that the police's mismanagement of the case of a thief that was caught during the rally led to the attack of government buildings and properties and subsequent destructions.⁵⁶⁰ Similarly, Rev Enoch Atiyaye said of the conflict:

The conflict was caused by an offensive cartoon on Prophet Mohammed which was published in Denmark. It portrayed the Islamic prophet in bad light. Muslims gathered to protest the Cartoon and as they gathered, it ended up in riot against Christians. The violence resulted from the protest.⁵⁶¹

Christians have therefore been left in bewilderment on why they became the victims of attack. According to the Christian Association of Nigeria, Maiduguri:

It is very clear that Christians in Borno State did not provoke the devastation that confronted them on Saturday, 18th Feb. 2006. As for the DENMARK CARTOON, no Christian has ever seen it, nor displays it. Rather CAN has come out to condemn this same cartoon in solidarity with Muslims and the Islamic faith long before the D-day. No Christian was present at the venue of the Rally much less disturb the proceedings. Those who destroyed lives, places of worship, businesses, houses and properties have questions to answer. Where is the connection between Denmark and Nigeria and the Christians in Borno State?⁵⁶²

From the above therefore, the Maiduguri conflict leaves many questions unanswered. As a community of believers, Maiduguri Muslims had the right to protest what they considered blasphemous to the Islamic *Ummah*, like many others did. However, to make innocent Nigerians their scapegoats appears difficult to explain. Rev Enoch Atiyaye further explains:

The conflict was carefully planned. Everywhere was engulfed all at once. The people in Ramat Square could not have carried out all the damages...No Christian disturbed their protest march...Although Christian leaders condemned it [the cartoon]; they [Muslims] still attacked Christians. Not a single Christian or Church reacted in terms of retaliation...Muslims attacked Christians, destroyed their homes, businesses and lives. Not one Muslim was killed or injured. All the people killed, about 51, were Christians and the government quickly arranged for their corpses to be taken to an unknown destination in ambulances. The conflict was actually religious.⁵⁶³

⁵⁶⁰ Interview with Hajiya Rabi Ado, Maiduguri, 25/4/07.

⁵⁶¹ Interview with Rev. Enoch Atiyaye ((Secretary, CAN Metropolitan), Maiduguri, 22/4/07

⁵⁶² CAN, "Memorandum on Maiduguri", 9.

⁵⁶³ Atiyaye, Maiduguri, 19/4/2007.

Remote Causes

As expected, interviewees gave various opinions on the remote causes of the conflict. While there were a few agreements between Muslims and Christians on the causes of the conflict, there were also differences in their views.

Religion

Although Christians in Maiduguri maintained that the city had been relatively peaceful when compared with other parts of Northern Nigeria, they also admitted facing marginalization and “persecution” for a long time, not only in the city, but in the entire state. Some of the areas of the unfair treatment include the open employment of derogatory terms such as *arne* and *kafiri* (infidel) by both young and adult Muslims; refusal of the teaching of Christian Religious Knowledge (CRK) in public schools while Islam is taught in all schools,⁵⁶⁴ denial of Christians’ appointment to top positions in the government of the state; refusal to air Christian programmes on the Borno Radio and Television (BRTV); and non-allocation of land for the building of churches for over 25 years. In view of this, Christians were compelled to buy lands from Muslim vendors at prohibitive costs even though such lands were either located in environmentally degraded areas of town (like cemeteries and waste lands) or at the outskirts. To compound the problems, whenever work began in such places, Muslims usually interrupted the processes either by destroying the building or stunting the work.⁵⁶⁵

According to Rev Nigven Msheilia, the religious dimension to the conflict is historical. He opined that the Maiduguri Muslims saw themselves as the custodians of Islamic heritage, since Islam first came to Nigeria through the Borno Empire. And because Europeans and the Church came later, they would not stand to see the Church growing in Borno State with such huge success as it was.⁵⁶⁶ In other words, the Maiduguri Muslims carried out the violent actions of February 18, 2007 to attack

⁵⁶⁴ Jan Boer in his *Christian: Why This Muslim Violence?* (Belleville: Essence Publishing, 2004), 137-138.

⁵⁶⁵ CAN, “Memorandum on Maiduguri”, 2-3.

⁵⁶⁶ Interview with Rev Nigven Msheilia (General Secretary, CAN, Borno State), 18/4/07.

the growth of the Church in the state. Still on the growth of the Church, the issue of denial of land for Church building was linked. Rev Ishiru Garba said:

They had their plans all along to eliminate all Churches. Threats and rumours had been coming concerning the growth of Churches in Maiduguri. Actually, they would not approve to give land for building our places of worship in order to hinder the Church's expansion. But individuals buy the lands and sell to Christians. They [Muslims] build their mosques anywhere, but accuse Christians who buy lands with huge amounts of money of building in wrong places.⁵⁶⁷

The arguments of Msheilia and Garba tally with the study of Kaigama Atsakau Dio, who mentioned several ways in which Christians in Borno State were being marginalized. These include disallowing qualified Christian teachers from heading schools at all levels; non-inclusion of Christians in heading any of the seven emirate councils in the state; disallowing Christians from serving as local government chairmen; and refusal of high positions in government to Christians as from the "Director" cadre, no matter how qualified.⁵⁶⁸

Although it could be argued that the information given above may contain political and socio-economic features, they largely appear as religious. The clamour to hang on to top and key government offices is certainly for the purpose of retaining power to the exclusion of others, which may lead to conflict. But the reason why a political factor cannot be dominant in the Maiduguri conflict is quite obvious. The people who are complaining of being marginalized, mainly Christians, did not attack the Muslims. Like Atiyaye said above: "Not a single Christian or Church reacted in terms of retaliation...Muslims attacked Christians, destroyed their homes, businesses and lives." All effort to hear a contrary view to this during my interviews failed.

Another religious angle to the conflict is the opinion that if there had been regular religious dialogue between Muslims and Christians in the state, such a conflict would not have occurred. This was the position of Msheilia and Atiyaye. The former said:

⁵⁶⁷ Interview with Rev Ishiru Garba, (Minister in Charge, COCIN Church, Regional Headquarters, Maiduguri, Secretary, Regional church Council; Coordinator, CAN Metropolitan), Maiduguri, 21/4/07.

If there had been an inter-religious forum, the problem might have been avoided. If Christians and Muslims had been assisted by government to embark on inter-religious dialogue or some inter-faith programmes, the conflict would not have occurred. NIREC has not reached the grassroots. It is operating only at the apex.⁵⁶⁹

The above shows the urgent need to establish the state branch of NIREC. But a member of the FGD group expected dialogue to have involved people in government as well. She said: “There should have been inter-religious forum for dialogue of the stake holders – Christians, Muslims, chiefs and the governor. All the district heads and religious leaders should have been meeting to warn their people.”⁵⁷⁰

Again, Sheikh Abba Aji said concerning the absence of dialogue:

There was no opinion forum between Muslim and Christian leaders. If there were one, there would be understanding and the religious leaders would have been able to correct the government. Right now, Muslim-Christian forum holds only when there are problems. The immediate problem is made the agenda and a ‘Fire Brigade’ approach is employed. There is need for Muslim and Christians to come together to dialogue.⁵⁷¹

But Rev Adamu insists that the kind of dialogue needed to prevent conflict must be both intra and inter religious. He blamed the conflict on Christian disunity. In a rhetorical question, he asked: “If we don’t cooperate among ourselves, how can we face the aggression against us? We must have a united voice in order to be able to resist the attack against us.”⁵⁷² He further explained that Christians in Maiduguri could not be described to have been operating in unity before the conflict. He complained about youths who had the feeling that their Christianity was superior to that of the old folks and therefore looked down on some categories of churches. He also accused some new churches of ‘sheep stealing’ because they depended on poaching members of other congregations rather than seeking new converts. As a result of this, most of the churches were not united.⁵⁷³

⁵⁶⁸ Kaigama Atsakau Dio, *Religious Freedom in Borno State Since 1960*, A Research Submitted to the Theological College of Northern Nigeria, Bukuru, in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of Bachelor of Divinity, in Affiliation with the University of Jos, May 1998, 26-39.

⁵⁶⁹ Atiyaye, Maiduguri, 19/4/07.

⁵⁷⁰ FGD, Maiduguri, 27/4/07.

⁵⁷¹ Sheikh Abba Aji, Maiduguri, 22/4/07.

⁵⁷² Interview with Rev Joshua Ruwa Adamu, Maiduguri, 19/4/07.

⁵⁷³ Ibid.

Adamu further argued that it was lack of unity which affected the compensation which the government promised Christians for the destructions that occurred. He said the governor took a step to assist in compensating victims and a committee was formed. While only one meeting was held, rumours were already going on among the Churches that he (the CAN Chairman for the State) had been ‘settled’. He said an estimate of about N1.7 billion had been made and the governor had asked to see the President for assistance. Afterwards, he said the President had promised to provide the money and that the Maiduguri Christians should be patient. Meanwhile Christians were saying “Baba has been settled”. In view of this, he withdrew from the committee because he did not want his reputation to be tarnished. Therefore, though Christians were cheated, they were not united to get the support which the government promised. He however hoped that the support would still come although it was already over a year since the conflict occurred.⁵⁷⁴

According to Simon Chia, “Christian unity is very important. As it is now, Christians are isolated from themselves and there is need for them to come together. Before they can adequately tackle the problem they are having with Muslims in the state, they must cooperate with one another.”⁵⁷⁵

On inter-religious dialogue between Christians and Muslims, Adamu declared that the need was urgent. He said: “Good relationship helps to build peace. We must receive them [Muslims] if we [Christians] want them to receive us and not wait for them to do it before we do it.” Also, Hajia Ado said:

There is need for the leaders of the two religions to be involved in dialogue with one another or to have an inter-religious forum. Nigeria has been talking about NIREC. There is need for NIREC to be operational in Borno State and possibly to reach every district of the state. Also, there is need to caution the strange people who enter the town.

Garba recalled one occasion when nine DPOs (Divisional Police Officers), Christian leaders and prominent Imams, discussed the issue of security in the state. After that meeting, there had been none again. He opined that if dialogue failed once, it could be tried again.⁵⁷⁶ Further, Garba said: “Dialogue will have to be on two levels. First,

⁵⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁵ Interview with Mr. Simon Chia, Maiduguri, 19/4/07.

⁵⁷⁶ Garba, Maiduguri, 21/4/07.

there is need for dialogue among Christians. It is not the prerogative of Government to start that. Then the dialogue should be taken to the other religion.”⁵⁷⁷

Another religious reason behind the conflict was said to be an earlier protest against the teaching of CRK in schools. According to Chia, the case went to court and the Borno State CAN won, because Islamic Religious Knowledge (IRK) was taught in all schools. However, Muslims openly fought the verdict, burning down vehicles in the state and threatening further violence if teaching of CRK began in any school. And up till the time of my investigation, teaching CRK was prohibited in primary schools in Borno State. Again, he said that the location of some of the big churches of Maiduguri in the centre of town was another tacit cause of the conflict. According to him, those churches used to stand at the fringes of the town in the past. But in the course of expansion, those Churches became located in the heart of the town. He opined that some of the fight against the church is to ensure that they are relocated from the heart of town and re-positioned in obscurity. Therefore, Chia felt that the strained relationship between Muslims and Christians in Maiduguri had been there long before the conflict. He expressed the matter as follows:

The conflict was caused as a result of division between Muslims and Christians. There has not been proper dialogue. No forum for Christians and Muslims to understand each other. There is apparent apartness and envy, so any problem may trigger bigger problems. If you are living with a person and you do not communicate with each other, if he sees your thing damaging, he will do nothing about it.⁵⁷⁸

From the above, the position of all the Christians interviewed on the conflict is clear. They believed that the conflict was a persecution of the church. As for the Muslims, it is striking that although they did not deny that Christians were the victims of the attack, they argued that the conflict was caused by unemployment, poverty, ignorance and ‘foreigners’ in Maiduguri.

Unemployment, Poverty and Ignorance

According to Sheikh Abba Aji, a combination of poverty, unemployment and lack of education was responsible for the crisis, which he blamed ‘leaders’ for. He said:

⁵⁷⁷ Ibid.

[There is] no leadership in the society and poverty has stricken many! This brings frustration and anger to the unemployed. Also, children come into this city as *almajirai* in trailers yearly. They see the children of leaders receiving good education while they are denied. This leads to frustration. Therefore, poverty and lack of engagement brought all these crises because a person who has not eaten could carry out any kind of destruction just for the promise of two hundred naira [or one pound].⁵⁷⁹

Going around Maiduguri during my field work, I could observe large numbers of young people hanging about in clusters, who appeared to have nothing doing. My interviewees told me that most of those youths were idle people who spent whatever meagre earnings they had on drugs and Indian hemp. It was also said that they were always eager to take advantage of situations to perpetrate their selfish schemes. This was quite an unexpected discovery for me as I did not associate the conflict with unemployment or hoodlums. But indeed, the visibility of idleness among youths in Maiduguri town was frightening and both Muslim and Christian interviewees called attention to the menace. According to Mallama Safia Auwal, “many of those trouble makers are idle and they take drugs. If they had had something to do, they would not be carrying out violence.”⁵⁸⁰

The situation of unemployment has been aggravated by a high concentration of the *almajiri*, most of whom had no parents in Maiduguri. They were usually deposited in the town in large numbers and left to scout for religious instructors who were hardly able to feed their own families. Consequently, these youths were made to go around the town daily in search of food to eat by begging and doing menial jobs. Because such youths were usually laden with anger and frustration, they were palpable tools for violent actions. Msheilia opined that these thousands of *almajiri*, due to their lack of parental love and compassion, were usually ruthless in the slightest matters of religious aggravation. He said:

Many [almajiri] children are withdrawn from schools and made to fend for themselves quite early in life. To solve the problems of our society, we must approach it from its roots. People are hungry and angry with the society and so, at the slightest opportunity, they vent their anger by taking the laws into their hands.

⁵⁷⁸ Chia, Maiduguri, 19/4/07.

⁵⁷⁹ Aji, Maiduguri, 22/4/2007.

⁵⁸⁰ Interview with Mallama Safiya Auwal, Maiduguri, 19/4/07

The main way of addressing the problem is to get the people engaged. The younger they are, the more dangerous they are because stoning and burning is fun to them.⁵⁸¹

Aba Aji also maintained that the main problem of the town was bad leadership due to the inability of government to clear the streets of these miscreants by meaningfully engaging them. Rather, he held that leaders had become greedy and corrupt. And because they thought of themselves alone, the scoundrels on the streets would not cease to seek opportunities to burgle them. He asserted that these unemployed youths had become tools in the hands of modern politicians for election campaigns and malpractices. At the offer of meagre amounts, they could kill, which made decent people to avoid going to the polls during elections.⁵⁸² Attributing the Maiduguri conflict to these youths, a member of the FGD said: “It was all the work of rascals. We had a rally in Ramat Square and everything was going on well. All of a sudden there was police teargas and there was pandemonium. From there, the rascal boys took over the stage and started burning vehicles.”⁵⁸³

While one must take seriously the issues of unemployment, anger and frustration, one still wonders why such dispositions would lead to the killing of adherents of a particular religion alone, destroying their places of worship and looting their property. Should not poverty and unemployment make the poor to rise up against the rich indiscriminately, thus confirming the Marxist theory? Also, given the fact that unemployment and frustration in Nigeria are not exclusive to Maiduguri, questions have continued to be raised on why similar attacks of the adherents of a particular religion have not been the case in other parts of the country. This same issue agitated the mind of Garba:

They were saying it was *yan iska* (hoodlums) that were doing it- not religious people. But we Christians are arguing that if it was merely the *yan iska* who did it, why did they not fight everybody and every house? Why were they selective in their destruction? Some Muslims and the Government tried to give a different name to the conflict, but we know it was religious. For instance, some of them are saying it was political. What politics? How many Christians are in any political struggle in Borno State? Do the Muslims not dominate everywhere? This was purely a religious crisis with the aim of wiping out Christianity.⁵⁸⁴

⁵⁸¹ Msheilia, Maiduguri, 18/4/07

⁵⁸² FGD, Maiduguri, 27/4/07.

⁵⁸³ Aji, Maiduguri, 22/4/07.

⁵⁸⁴ Garba, Maiduguri, 21/4/07.

In other words, Garba believed that the selective nature of the destructions of lives and property which favoured Islam ruled out any attempt to describe the conflict apart from its religious centrality. As we shall see more clearly on the ‘manifestation’ of the conflict below, the victims of killing, destruction of property and looting were mainly Christians. Thus, the argument that unemployment was the cause of the conflict is also suffused with issues of religion.

The conflict was also said to have been caused by ignorance. Sheikh Abdulahi Mohammed, while connecting the conflict with the issue of unemployment, emphasized the role of ignorance as well:

Poverty and lack of engagement is now seen as a business. People lack what to do and so they begin problems. If you go out you will see people in groups with neither Qur’anic knowledge nor Western Education. They wait for people to throw money at them and are ready to do anything they are paid to do. They live on drugs.⁵⁸⁵

He therefore connected both academic and religious ignorance to conflict generation and drug-taking by the youths. The Shehu of Borno also spoke on the issue of ignorance as follows:

We have always been concerned for peace in this State. Our people used to foment trouble in the past at every appearance of the eclipse of the moon. But we educated them and this stopped when they became enlightened. The people need to be further enlightened to know that if a person starts a crisis, it will affect others and give a bad reputation to the town.⁵⁸⁶

Another kind of ignorance which was seen as important to fight was social. Sheikh Aji called on government and religious leaders to educate people on having the number of children they could care for. He said that children given as *almajiri* are children whose parents have no concern about their whereabouts. And if one has children that one cannot care for, it actually breeds problems in the society. This response of Sheikh Aji was quite striking because public perception in Nigeria is that Muslims do not welcome criticism on either birth control or the *almajiri* system. But Aji in fact strongly held that children must be given adequate parental care and each family should have the number it could control. Letting them loose in large numbers

⁵⁸⁵ Interview with Sheikh Abdulahi Mohammed (Member, Sharia Implementation Committee, Borno State), Maiduguri, 19/4/07.

⁵⁸⁶ Interview with The Shehu of Borno, Alhaji Dr. Mustapha Umar El-Kanemi, The Traditional and Religious Leader of Borno State, Vice Chairman of JNI in Nigeria and chairman, JNI, Borno State), Maiduguri, 20/4/07.

into the hands of clerics who are unable to adequately fend for their own families deprives them of the family environment that breeds a healthy society.

Inadequate Security

Lack of adequate security was mentioned as a part of the cause of the conflict by all my interviewees. They blamed the government for taking the issue of security frivolously, which led to the avoidable loss of lives and property. According to Adamu, the peace of a land depends on security and constitutionally, the governor is the Chief Security Officer of the State. He said there were great lapses with the government which made the Shehu to ask the Commissioner of Police where his men were when all the violent actions were being perpetrated. Adamu further said:

You see, in 2002, this [conflict] would have happened in Borno State on the Sharia issue. They [Muslims] wanted to come to town to attack Christians, but the then governor and commissioner of police did not allow them. This time around, there was no security cover at all and Muslims just freely attacked Christians who were most unprepared for the attack.⁵⁸⁷

According to Chia, a similar rally and protest had taken place in Kano State and the governor there was present. Because he was there, things went smoothly. However, in the Maiduguri rally, neither was the governor present nor was adequate security provided. He concluded on the security issue thus:

Knowing that religion is delicate, for peaceful demonstration to be achieved, adequate security would have been provided at strategic points to stop those who would take laws into their hands.⁵⁸⁸

Similarly, Atiyaye felt that if the police had responded even to the distress calls made as the violence began, the extent of the damage would have been reduced. He held that adequate security arrangement ought to have been made, considering the volatile nature of religion in Nigeria.⁵⁸⁹

Foreign Influences

There were those who felt that the conflict was caused by people from outside the city of Maiduguri, who can be classified into two. First, some people argued that the

⁵⁸⁷ Interview with Rev Joshua Ruwa Adamu, Chairman, Christian Association of Nigeria, Borno State), Maiduguri, 19/4/07.

⁵⁸⁸ Interview with Mr. Simon Chia, Maiduguri, 19/4/07.

⁵⁸⁹ Atiyaye, Maiduguri, 22/4/07.

Hausa people, who came from other Northern States, caused the problem. In this case, they included Hausa people residing in Maiduguri and those who came to join them from outside. Because Maiduguri belongs mainly to the Kanuri, the Hausa people are seen as non-indigenes too. But despite their being non-indigenes, they are said to still want to dominate both indigenes and other settlers. According to Msheilia, the Kanuri are much more tolerant of Christians than the Hausa and they even issue licenses to Hausa preachers in order to ensure that inflammatory preaching is disallowed in the state. He also claimed that 80% of conflicts between Muslims and Christians in the state were caused by the Hausa people.⁵⁹⁰ These Hausa people were said to have trooped into Maiduguri in large numbers before the day of the carnage.⁵⁹¹ Adamu said:

This [the conflict] was not the main work of the Kanuris, but the Hausas. In Hausari [area of town] they did not burn the shops of the people, because the shops which were rented out to Christians belonged to Hausa Muslims. So, they brought the property out and set them ablaze after looting what they needed. But in the town, where the shops belonged to the Kanuri, both the shops and the property in them were burnt, after looting.⁵⁹²

Second, some people argued that foreigners from outside the country caused the conflict. Because Maiduguri shares borders with Chad, Niger, and Cameroon, it is believed that foreigners were behind the conflict, probably in connivance with some Maiduguri Muslims. This happened to be the position of the Shehu. He said:

Not good people did it [the conflict]...Few bad elements can destroy a good place. The *chirani* people from other places are the ones doing this. Christians and Muslims in Borno don't fight themselves. These foreigners don't care what happens as they run away from the country after they achieve their aim.

The *chirani* people are dry season farmers from neighbouring countries who usually cross into the Northern states of Nigeria, but sometimes, they are themselves from these Northern States. In the Shehu's view, these foreigners were the cause of the conflict of February 18, 2007. He therefore called attention to the need to alert government security when strange people are seen trooping into town. I must say here, in spite of the Maiduguri incident, that blaming foreigners for most religious conflicts in Nigeria is quite common.

⁵⁹⁰ Msheilia, 18/4/07.

⁵⁹¹ Atiyaye, Maiduguri, 22/4/07.

⁵⁹² Interview with Rev Joshua Adamu Ruwa, 19/4/07.

Over-relaxation by Christians

Some interviewees felt that the conflict occurred due to the unprepared-ness and over relaxation by Christians. Therefore, Christians were blamed for being off guard, which gave room to the conflict. Garba argued that Christians had heard about a rally coming, but they were too relaxed about it. For him, information should be properly managed in ways to ensure that the Church is not just attacked unprepared. He said:

On the side of Christians, if they had taken rumours seriously and organized youths to take cover of Churches, it would not have been so serious. If Christians had been sensitive to the cry of Muslims that they would not agree, because their prophet had been abused, they would have prepared better for what happened. Christians had nothing in their hand for self-defence. By the time they see you with something in your hand, they will know you will put up some resistance and be afraid. I am not advocating weapons to fight to kill, but for self-defence. This is because the attacker is a human being too. He will be afraid and cannot just come to you if he knows you will defend yourself. But most of our people, for lack of defence, ran away from small boys who had the chance to set their buildings ablaze. That is what I am saying. We have learned our lessons now. Most Christians are now ready and alert. We will not instigate any violence, but we must defend ourselves from extinction. In the future, this will never happen again.⁵⁹³

It was therefore the belief that if prompt actions had been taken by Christians on information received in the days preceding the rally, the conflict would either have been avoided or its extent drastically curtailed. From foregoing, one can see in the Maiduguri crisis, the usual complexity of conflicts. Most conflicts will normally be caused by several factors. Yet, most conflicts have dominant factors which are more obvious than the others. In this case, I perceive the dominant underlying factor as religion. Therefore, I would argue that the Maiduguri conflict was largely caused by the religious factor even though the other factors mentioned cannot be separated from it.

Manifestation of Conflict

All the interviewees responded alike on the main ways in which the conflict manifested, but with varying details. Basically, the conflict involved killing of Christians, afflicting them with injuries, looting and burning down their properties, particularly shops; burning down vehicles, houses and Church buildings. I made frantic efforts to know from my interviewees, both Muslims and Christians, if there

⁵⁹³ Garba, Maiduguri, 21/4/07

was any Muslim that sustained any injury or losses in the crisis, but I was told there was none. According to Sheikh Mohammed, “several Churches were burnt down and shops belonging to Ibos were set ablaze. Also, some people were killed, I don’t know how many.”⁵⁹⁴

In his contribution, Rev Garba said:

The number of lives has been estimated at about 52. Many corpses were at the hospital and the officials of CAN were denied access to the mortuary. They could not clip pictures. A Catholic priest was one of those killed. In my local church, a couple lost seven children who were burnt to death by the *almajirai*. The children tried to escape, but were chased back to the house. The house was set ablaze and all the 7 children were burnt beyond recognition.⁵⁹⁵

Concerning the burning of properties, Rev Mshelia said:

About 57 Churches were set on fire or destroyed. Shops, particularly the ones belonging to Igbo people, were destroyed and looted. In one street, about 30 shops belonging to the Igbo were destroyed. Affected people formed an association of victims.⁵⁹⁶

The Igbo of South-Eastern Nigeria are predominantly Christians who are very vigorous business people and it was their shops that were largely attacked. Singling them out for this kind of assault can easily show a complexity involving the ethnic, economic and religious factors. On one hand it could be argued that the attackers were envious of the economic success of the Igbo people in their midst and used the opportunity to raid them. On the other hand it could be contested that the animosity of the Nigerian Civil War which involved the Igbo and the rest of the country from 1967 to 1970 was still being fought by the North. Again, although the majority of the Igbo are Christians, they were not the only people attacked and killed. Many Christians from Borno State and other parts of the country were also killed. Therefore, while other factors were manifest in the Maiduguri conflict, the religious aspect of the manifestation was the most prominent.

It was gathered that Muslim youths were seen riding motorcycles all over town, distributing petrol products from place to place in gallons. The products were poured into sachet water bags and hauled into buildings belonging to Christians.⁵⁹⁷ In some

⁵⁹⁴ Interview with Sheikh Abdulahi Mohammed, Maiduguri, 20/4/07.

⁵⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁶ Msheilia, Maiduguri, 18/4/07.

⁵⁹⁷ Atiyaye, Maiduguri, 22/4/07.

instances, the Muslim youths attacked their victims with stones, clubs and sticks, in addition to the petrol which they carried to set buildings ablaze. Rev Adamu mentioned how his Church was so attacked. A youth who tried to resist the attackers of the Church was seriously wounded in the head and he began bleeding profusely. Ironically, Rev Adamu and all the women with whom he was holding a meeting on that day ran into the houses of Muslim neighbours to take refuge. The young man who was wounded in the head was also given First Aid in the home of these Muslim neighbours who lived next to the Church. And because of their weight, some women who jumped out of the Church compound through the same fence that Rev Adamu had escaped broke their legs.⁵⁹⁸

Also, it was reported that the riots continued outside the state capital into Biu and Mogomeri where many shops, hotels and Church buildings were destroyed. The burning down of shops was selective. If setting a shop ablaze was seen to affect a Muslim's property, the items were removed from the shop, looted, and the remainder was set ablaze outside. In this way the personage of Gonge Baptist Church was spared from being burnt. Realizing that they could not set it ablaze without destroying the Muslim neighbour's house, the building was spared. However, they took out the items inside the building and set them ablaze.⁵⁹⁹

Ending the Conflict

There were varying views on how the Maiduguri conflict ended on that Saturday. Depending on the areas where the interviewees were on that day, the conflict was said to have covered from 10.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m.

First, the conflict ended due to the action of religious leaders and elders in the communities. The Shehu of Borno said:

It was prayer that stopped the conflict and the good advice we were giving to people. The people in this place listen to me, both Christians and Muslims. Therefore, I sent word round to encourage

⁵⁹⁸ Ruwa Adamu, Maiduguri, 19/4/07

⁵⁹⁹ Garba, Maiduguri, 21/4/07.

the people and to tell the perpetrators of violence to stop. I know it was just God that stopped the conflict.⁶⁰⁰

The above shows the combination of human effort and dependence on divine intervention through prayers for the conflict to end. Shekh Mohammed also emphasized the roles of the Shehu and the elders in the various communities who opposed the violence and spoke to young people in their areas to desist from the violence. On the Shehu's role, Mohammed said:

Very specially, the Shehu did his best to stop the conflict. He sent out his elders and messengers to various places to tell the people to stop the violence. The Shehu hates things like this because he is a man of peace and hospitality. He loves strangers in his community and hates violence. In fact he periodically brings his district heads and leaders together for meetings and tells them to speak to their people in various places that there is need to live in peace.⁶⁰¹

This shows the visible role of a religious/traditional leader in ending the Maiduguri conflict. Also, FGD members spoke extensively of the role of Sheikh Abba Aji, who happened to be one of those I interviewed, in ending the conflict. One member said:

Sheikh Abba Aji spoke to all the youths in the area not to participate in the fight. In fact, all people who were afraid fled to his house, particularly Christians. He is a renowned Islamic cleric and everyone respects him. He provided food and shelter in his large compound to many Christians and Muslims who were afraid of returning home for over a week even after the conflict.⁶⁰²

Of course I had the privilege of visiting the home of Sheikh Aji to interview him and I was taken round his large compound to see where people, especially Christians, fled to, for protection during the violence.

Second, Rev Adamu opined that the violence stopped because the Christians did not fight back or respond in any way. All they did was to run for safety. He believed that the conflict would have lingered longer if Christians had made any attempt to fight

⁶⁰⁰ The Shehu, Maiduguri, 19/4/07.

⁶⁰¹ Mohammed, Maiduguri, 20/4/07.

⁶⁰² FGD, Maiduguri, 27/4/07.

back. Therefore, when the attackers were satisfied, they stopped the violence.⁶⁰³ And Garba confirmed this by saying: “You know that crises stay long when there is retaliation.”⁶⁰⁴ All the people interviewed either firmly or tacitly agreed that Christians did not fight back during the conflict.

Much attention was drawn by all the interviewees to the visible absence of the police and soldiers during the hours of the carnage. Atiyaye captured it succinctly:

The violence stopped when the people were satisfied. Like I said, no policeman or soldier was around. No police was there to stop them. They operated unabated. The people stopped when they felt like stopping, when they felt they had satisfied their desire to afflict the body of Christ with pain. They appeared to have been timed. Within two hours, no security personnel came out. The military came out after 2 hours, not to stop them, but to maintain peace.⁶⁰⁵

Meshelia also affirmed the absence of the police⁶⁰⁶ and Ado simply said: “Police intervention was late. If they had intervened in good time, the crisis would have been averted. Anyway, by evening, soldiers were all around.”⁶⁰⁷

FGD members were divided on how the conflict ended. A member said: “The soldiers stopped the conflict”. Another member of the FGD said “No, it already stopped before the soldiers came. There was no security at all. No policeman was seen during the violence. It was when it had stopped that they came.” However, on the whole, most of the FGD members said that response from the government security agents was late in coming.⁶⁰⁸ And Rev Adamu affirmed: “Even the Shehu wept and told the Commissioner of Police that he had cheated the state by giving it a bad reputation. No single policeman came out from 10.am to 4.00 pm”.⁶⁰⁹

⁶⁰³ Ruwa Adamu, Maiduguri, 19/4/07

⁶⁰⁴ Garba, Maiduguri, 21/4/07

⁶⁰⁵ Atiyaye, Maiduguri, 22/4/07.

⁶⁰⁶ Msheilia, Maiduguri, 18/4/07.

⁶⁰⁷ Ado, Maiduguri, Maiduguri, 25/4/07.

⁶⁰⁸ FGD, Maiduguri, 27/4/07

⁶⁰⁹ Ruwa Adamu, Maiduguri, 19/4/07.

Consequences of the Maiduguri Conflict

There were many consequences of the Maiduguri conflict. First, there was the problem of internal displacement of people. Initially, many Christians fled their homes and took refuge in various camps. Atiyaye said:

Some people left the town for losing everything they had, but some others who lost everything did not leave the town. This is because some of such people have been living in Maiduguri for over 30 years. When everything was destroyed, they became like people just coming to the town anew. It was quite pitiful.⁶¹⁰

While most of those who initially fled their homes came back when calmness returned to the town, a few others left the town completely.⁶¹¹ Second, mistrust, fears, bitterness, broken relationships and suspicion increased, leading to relocation of people, especially Christians, from areas they considered unsafe.⁶¹² According to Msheilia:

People are still embittered as could be seen in the first anniversary of the conflict which held at the EYN Church. A few people have moved to safer areas while others left the town. Bitterness is there. No compensation for Churches and families. We are now very careful of the Muslims because they can be dangerous.⁶¹³

Further on the issue of bitterness, a member of the FGD expressed his feelings as follows: “Christians were cheated. It was only Christians that died. Only Christians’ shops were burnt down. Only Churches were burnt down. The Christians did not retaliate even once. No Christian fought back. Houses were burnt with children in them. It is a sad thing to remember.”⁶¹⁴ But it was not only Christians that were bitter about the conflict. According to Auwal:

We have been unhappy that such a thing happened. In fact I don’t like to remember it. Some people lost all that they had in the fire. Definitely you know that such people cannot be happy. Some people lost their children in fire. How can they be happy? May God not allow such to happen again!⁶¹⁵

⁶¹⁰ Atiyaye, Maiduguri, 22/4/07.

⁶¹¹ Garba, Maiduguri, 19/4/07.

⁶¹² Ibid.

⁶¹³ Msheilia, Maiduguri, 18/4/07. Sadly, the EYN Church was burnt down by Islamic fanatics on the night of July 26, 2009, under the leadership of one Mohammed Yusuf who claims to be leading a Nigerian Taliban. See <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/8172270.stm>

⁶¹⁴ FGD, Maiduguri, 27/4/07

⁶¹⁵ Auwal, Maiduguri, 22/4/07.

The Shehu also spoke passionately about his state of mind on the conflict: “The whole issue has made me very unhappy for a long time.”⁶¹⁶

Third, the conflict led to economic hardship. In some families the bread winners were killed. Also, most businesses were paralyzed and this led to the formation of several traders’ associations particularly by the Igbo victims whose properties were destroyed.⁶¹⁷ These associations were to liaise with the state government on how they might be assisted to reconstruct their businesses and to avoid such attacks in the future. The task of the association also included regulating and fixing prices of items being sold by the victims in such a way as to assist them to recover some of their losses. This turned out to increase inflation.⁶¹⁸

Fourth, the conflict gave Maiduguri town a negative reputation. Most cities in Nigeria are not desirous of being tagged as violent. Such a tag usually carries a lot of consequences for development. Sometimes, both local and international investors consciously avoid such places. According to a member of the FGD:

Well, all I know is that they have tried to give Maiduguri a bad name, but this is a place of peace. In fact the Shehu was very bitter for what happened. Everyone knows he is a man of peace who welcomes and loves strangers.⁶¹⁹

Ado also said: “Maiduguri, which has been peaceful, is now being tagged a place of violence,”⁶²⁰ and the Shehu said:

They [those who perpetrated the violence] tried to give us a bad name and that was what made me unhappy. Maiduguri is a place of hospitality. Historically we have been known to be accommodating of guests. We welcome everybody and we were sad that the issue tried to give us a bad name. We regret that it ever happened. Living in peace together with everybody is our chief aim. Whether Christians or Muslims, we are expected to live together in peace.⁶²¹

⁶¹⁶ The Shehu, Maiduguri, 19/4/07.

⁶¹⁷ Ibid.

⁶¹⁸ Ibid.

⁶¹⁹ FGD, Maiduguri, 27/4/07.

⁶²⁰ Ado, Maiduguri, 25/4/07.

⁶²¹ The Shehu, Maiduguri, 19/4/07.

Fifth, the conflict devastated several families through the loss of loved ones. Whether it was children or adults, the loss of innocent family members through gruesome means could be very devastating. Hence, Msheilia spoke about the bitterness which was still in the hearts of survivors of people killed, a year after the conflict. For instance, a family in Rev Garba's church which lost several children in flames would actually remain traumatized for a long time. According to Atiyaye:

Some people, due to lack of money, can no longer take care of their families. In fact the family has been most severely hit. Many children have been withdrawn from school because parents can no longer afford the fees. The conflict has contributed to educational regression. Poverty became increased. Several people lost their homes and are yet to be rehabilitated.⁶²²

Such family disasters have unlimited consequences. They can lead to moral, economic, educational, emotional, spiritual and social destabilizations for victims. These situations actually call for the Church's pastoral care in a very special way.

Sixth, there were issues of injustice and impunity as aftermath of the conflict. Msheilia recalled that the state governor initially promised Christians some compensation to assuage the enormity of their losses, but refused to fulfil his promise in order to retain his hold on political power. He said:

The Governor told the [Christian] people that the Federal Government would do some compensation. He also promised some compensation to victims of the crisis from the state, but in view of the coming election, not wanting Muslims to withdraw their votes, he did nothing. Muslims had vowed to cause problems if he compensated the Christians. Latter, the governor told the people that even though the Federal Government had given approval, the approval had not yet been turned into cheque. This is very unjust.⁶²³

That again shows how religion and politics are tied together in Nigeria. It was believed that the governor's failure to compensate the Christians was because he feared losing the votes of the Muslim majority. Victims were therefore left to fend for themselves and to manage a little food relief from NEMAN (National Emergency Management Agency of Nigeria), Christians in Plateau State, and the St. Stephen's Foundation (NGO). According to Rev Adamu, the food and materials provided from

⁶²² Atiyaye, Maiduguri, 22/4/07.

⁶²³ Msheilia, Maiduguri, 18/4/07.

these bodies and the sum of fourteen thousand naira⁶²⁴ given to each victim of the violence, were all that was received.⁶²⁵ This situation actually calls for the Church's strategic and practical involvement in the lives of the people.

Atiyaye expressed disappointment at the governor's inaction on the matter of compensation. He recalled that a similar event had occurred in Jigawa State when Muslims in Dutse attacked Christians and burnt down their Churches and businesses. Following this, Governor Saminu Turaki compensated the Christians from the funds of the state. When asked why he took the action, he told the Muslims in his state: 'you destroyed their property and we gave them your money'. He opined that if people know that their actions will deprive them of some benefit, they will be reluctant in perpetrating acts of violence.⁶²⁶

On the case of impunity, it was said that despite all the losses incurred in Maiduguri, the perpetrators of the violence were not made to face the full wrath of the law. Garba spoke on this:

About 300 people who were arrested were released after a few days. We mentioned the names of prominent people involved, but none of them was arrested. The governor promised compensation but has not done anything. We [Christians] petitioned the Federal Government and the Inspector General of Police sent a Police Commissioner who came to interview the Christians, but nothing has come out of it. We were cheated but we did not retaliate. If we had killed just one Muslim, the story would have been different.⁶²⁷

Atiyaye also lent voice to the issue of impunity as follows:

If the government has been arresting and punishing the people doing these things, the conflict would probably not have happened. The problem in this country is that people who perpetrate such violence and cause incalculable losses for the nation are never brought to book. The people who did the Maiduguri operation were not arrested. Just a few shabbily dressed and probably innocent individuals from Chad and Niger were arrested and set free after a few days. The Muslims came out and spoke through the media that they knew nothing about the violence. Why were the organizers of the rally/protests not arrested? They should have been arrested.⁶²⁸

Seventh, peace efforts followed the conflict, which began almost simultaneously as

⁶²⁴ N14, 000.00 is equivalent to £55.

⁶²⁵ Ruwa Adamu, Maiduguri, 19/4/07.

⁶²⁶ Atiyaye, Maiduguri, 22/4/07.

⁶²⁷ Garba, Maiduguri, 21/4/07.

⁶²⁸ Atiyaye, Maiduguri, 22/4/07.

the violence was going on, but continued afterwards. As mentioned above, the Shehu of Borno and many religious leaders were instantly involved in calling for peace. This effort continued as many people in Maiduguri, particularly the Kanuri, were said to have regretted the occurrence of the event. Rev Adamu said that peace had returned and relationships had been restored between Christians and Muslims. He put it thus:

As for us, we love them. It is as if nothing happened. A man lost seven children who were burnt in a room. He prayed that God would forgive them, for they did not know what they were doing. But up till now such families have been destabilized. Many are still in sorrow for what happened.⁶²⁹

What Adamu said above contains both hope and fear. The hope is that there was an appearance of peace all over the town again. The fear is that he agreed that many families were still destabilized. A person whose seven children were set ablaze would carry a serious burden for a long time which would require the continuous pastoral ministries of the Church. But not only Christians spoke encouragingly about the restored relationships. Sheikh Aba Aji opined that the relationship between Christian and Muslim leaders was never broken because the Christians knew that good Muslims would not be violent. And Sheikh Mohammed simply said: "Relationships have been restored. There is now peaceful coexistence between Muslims and Christians".⁶³⁰

Eighth, the conflict has led to increased unity of the Church. It was said that Christians were coming together in an improved manner. Interviewees pointed to the first interdenominational anniversary service which held in Maiduguri in memory of the victims of the conflict as a major evidence of Christian unity.⁶³¹

Members of the FGD and Ado mentioned the reprisal which took place in the South Eastern part of Nigeria in which many innocent Muslims were killed by Christians. They saw this as the most severe aftermath of the Maiduguri conflict. According to them, taking revenge on the innocent northerners living in the South-East was most unfair. Ado said:

⁶²⁹ Ruwa Adamu, 19/4/07.

⁶³⁰ Aji, Maiduguri, 22/2/07.

⁶³¹ Ibid.

What pained me most was the reprisal in Onitsha. Several innocent Muslims were killed there because, in actuality, the properties of many Igbo were damaged here. Many of their shops were burnt and I was personally displeased. This kind of things should be of the past in Nigeria. But it does not justify killing innocent people in the East.⁶³²

Although the reprisal attacks which occurred in the South-East of Nigeria was not the main focus of this research, a brief sketch of what happened is germane for a holistic overview of the narrative of the Denmark Cartoon in Nigeria.

Reprisal attacks from the South East:

If the Maiduguri religious crisis of February 18, 2006 had been contained in the city alone, the case would have been bad enough for Nigeria. Sadly, a worse situation developed in Onitsha and environs in the South Eastern part of the country, a predominantly Christian area. According to press reports, the Onitsha attack on Muslims, especially those from the North, was based on the massacre of the Igbo people in Maiduguri on the Cartoon crisis. By the second day of the crisis, health workers reported recovering over 80 corpses from the streets while more were still being recovered. Also, several houses belonging to Muslims were burnt down and a large number of Muslims were temporarily displaced. At the burial of some of the corpses found, the chairman of the Muslim Council of Nigeria in Anambra State, Alhaji Sabo Zubairu was quoted as saying:

God knows we are innocent. He knows we have not shed the blood of anybody. We were innocently attacked, killed and brutalized. Hundreds of others killed had their corpses burnt on the streets. Hundreds of others were brutally killed and dumped in ditches, wells and the River Niger. We shall all assemble before the Creator one day and account for our deeds. That day they will say what wrong we have done to them.⁶³³

The above shows the predicament of Nigeria in a growing era of religious intolerance. While in the Maiduguri crisis Christians were taken off guard by extremist Muslims, the Muslims in the South East were taken unawares by infuriated Igbo Christians. A case of mutual brutality, unrest and suspicion was therefore firmly established. Consequently, although the Danish cartoon attracted sporadic global condemnation, Nigeria suffered the highest casualties for it, which appears to be unresolved.

⁶³² Ado, Maiduguri, 25/4/07.

⁶³³ "Onitsha Crisis: Refugees Give Conditions for Return", Daily Trust, March 6, [/\iona.sms.ed.ac.uk\home\s0459568\Onitsha 4.htm](http://\iona.sms.ed.ac.uk\home\s0459568\Onitsha 4.htm), 12/2/2008.

Religious Teaching on Living with People of the Other Religion

Interviewees made several contributions on their understanding of the teaching of their faith as regards living with people of the 'other' religion, particularly vis-à-vis the conflict which occurred. Like in the narrative on the Jos conflict, I have grouped the responses according to the two religions involved in the conflict and I shall begin with the Muslim response.

First, Islam teaches Muslims to be good to others. Sheikh Mohammed contends that his religion does not teach one to do evil. Since all are looking for reward from God, actions must be patterned according to the claims of religions. He said 'action speaks louder than voice' and people who are good would be known if they are, by their fruits. He spoke passionately against doing evil as follows:

There is no room in Islam to even look wrongly at a person, not to talk of abusing him. To now go on to beat a person with a stick is completely wrong. The Islamic religion forbids even that, not to talk of violence. How could people who claim to be fighting for religion take the lives of others and steal their possession? These are people who are waiting for any opportunity to go and loot.⁶³⁴

As he spoke about the goodness expected of Muslims, he returned to the conflict which happened in order to show how defiant of the teachings of faith the behaviours were. Sheikh Aji also elaborated on this. According to him, Islam teaches that it is woe on a person to abuse another person's religion. In fact, he said it is wrong to even abuse a person's idol because if one does so, one's own religion would be abused. Such an attitude is also anti-missionary because if one wants to win people to his religion, he enlightens them to the faith; he does not abuse them. A Muslim is to explain the merits of his religion and not force others to turn to it because Islam says there is no compulsion in matters of religion.⁶³⁵

Second, all the Muslim interviewees held that their religion teaches peace. According to Ado, "Islam means peace and real Muslims always work for peace." Speaking further on this, the Shehu said:

⁶³⁴ Mohammed, Maiduguri, 20/4/07

⁶³⁵ Aji, Maiduguri, 22/2/07

In the days of the Prophet, there was covenant between him and Christians. Even marriage was encouraged in the days of the Prophet between Muslims and Christians. Some of the current preachers do not even know what the teaching of the Islam is. They are to let the people know that there is to be cordial relationship between Christians and Muslims...In schools, we have tried to make them teach these things.⁶³⁶

Also, a member of the FGD spoke extensively on the subject of peace in Islam as follows:

As Muslims, the teaching of our faith promotes peace in the community. We are to live in peace as it is taught in Islam; teach people to live in peace like the Muslim *al-umma* had taught since times immemorial. We are to be involved in teaching and following the teaching of the Koran and Hadith; giving more Islamic education to people; following Islamic teaching on how to live in peace; and, teaching people to forget past events and obey the teaching of Prophet Mohammed (Peace Be on Him).⁶³⁷

Third, Islam teaches hospitality towards strangers and people of other religions, particularly Christians and Jews. According to Abba Aji:

During the crisis, even Christians were in my house for refuge. This spirit of accommodation is what Islam teaches. Because I am close to the people, I am able to give practical leadership. Religious leaders should be close to the people and when they speak people will respect them, Christians and Muslims. Some Muslims were unhappy because I did not join them in the protest on the Danish cartoon. I told them that the reason I did not join was because the culprits were in Denmark, not Nigeria. And there were many elders who did not react with emotion like the youths. Elders react with intellect while youths work with emotion. Elders knew what to do. Like in some countries, all they did was to reject goods from Denmark. Here it was not the case. Rather, there was looting and stealing. That was not religion. Nothing they did was representing religion.⁶³⁸

Aji's response countered popular opinion on the conflict. People had presented the rally that took place as being supported by all Muslims, but he neither supported it nor participate in it. He also did not believe that Nigerians should be the scapegoats for what happened in Denmark. He stood for other approaches to dealing with the matter and his views are a caution against hasty generalization. Also, the matter of the Sheikh giving shelter and food to those who ran to him for refuge irrespective of their religious adherence recalls the issue of hospitality as stressed by the Jos

⁶³⁶ The Shehu, Maiduguri, 19/4/07.

⁶³⁷ FGD, 27/4/07.

⁶³⁸ Aji, Maiduguri, 22/4/07.

respondents. Because those who received this act of hospitality by the Sheikh were rescued from the terrible consequences of the violence, the important role of hospitality in handling conflict cannot be overemphasized.

Fourth, Islam has diverse teachings about neighbourliness. According to Sheikh Mohammed:

Islam teaches three levels of relationships between people. The first relationship concerns a person's family and relations. You are expected to treat them as your immediate neighbours. The second level of a relationship concerns a fellow Muslim. Every Muslim is your brother and you are to treat him or her as a good neighbour. The third level of relationship concerns fellow human beings living around you. In Islam, your neighbours, in this sense are persons living forty houses to your North, East, South and West. All these are your neighbours and you are expected to relate with them properly at their different levels. If you are wealthy, you are to use your wealth to help these neighbours of yours. When problem is coming, it is your duty to secure their protection. The people of the world will always fall into one of these categories around you and the Muslim is expected to relate properly to them and perform his duties towards them.⁶³⁹

The above extensive quotation is a summary of what most other Muslim interviewees said about the Islamic religion. They view Islam as categorizing all mankind as neighbours who must be properly treated. A Muslim has the responsibility of accepting, assisting and defending such neighbours.

For me as a Christian, this teaching sounds profound and was quite unexpected about Islamic religion. As we will see below, the teaching on the neighbour in Christianity is quite similar. There are therefore sufficient common grounds on which Muslims and Christians should shun violence and live together in peace. Although many scholars have contested that both the Christian and Muslim Scriptures contain passages that support violence, the flip side of that are the enormous passages of tenets that teach compassion and good neighbourliness.

To buttress the teaching on neighbourliness, several examples were made of the Prophet of Islam, Mohammed. According to Aji,

The prophet once went to visit a sick Jewish boy who was not friendly to him. When asked why he did so, he said it was because the boy was a neighbour. Islam teaches

⁶³⁹ Mohammed, Maiduguri, 20/4/07.

that every Muslim must be a good neighbour to all others, irrespective of their religion. What we need is accommodation of one another in Nigeria.⁶⁴⁰

Christians also responded to the question on the teaching of their religion on relating with people of other faiths, particularly Islam as follows:

First, all the Christian interviewees emphasized that the central teaching of the Bible is love for God and for fellow men. According to Atiyaye:

The fundamental teaching of the Christian faith is love – bless them who persecute you – overcome evil with good, turn the other cheek. In the days of Jesus’ arrest, he could have fought, but he did not. God has told the Church that this will happen. The Church will be cheated. We may even appear foolish to the world. The Bible says “vengeance is mine”. In spite of the fact that they attacked us, we are to teach love and love them. If they attack us and we attack them back, then we will have no message for them. The Church will have a voice when the people see the repercussion from God rather than from men. We must not deny Christ’s suffering. It is part of our faith. Trials and suffering are part of the persecution the Church is called to suffer and it must continue to show love.⁶⁴¹

The above emphasizes the centrality of love and Atiyaye holds that the example of Jesus must be followed not to revenge when being hurt. God is to avenge for the Christian when he is persecuted and persecution is a necessity for Christians. He also says ‘in spite of the fact that they attacked us, we are to teach love and love them.’ He therefore sees love beyond a passive refusal to revenge and says love is active expression of kindness to those who do the Christian wrong. To buttress this, Rev Adamu says:

We have to follow the word. “Vengeance is mine, says the Lord.” The Bible says that if the ox of your enemy falls into a pit, you should lift it up. We are to show love to them and through this they will know the kind of God we are serving. I have been greeting those who burnt down my Church. I hold no grudge against them. On the very day the crisis occurred, the Governor sent that they should pick me, at the order of the President from Abuja. The President did not want a repeat of what happened between him and the CAN Chairman in Jos. Some people rumoured that they had gone to kill me. But I was not killed. I was taken before the governor and I prayed for him. I asked God to bless him and give him wisdom. He was very surprised. That is the way we are to live. No enmity with any.⁶⁴²

⁶⁴⁰ Aji, Maiduguri, 22/4/07.

⁶⁴¹ Atiyaye, Maiduguri, 22/4/07.

⁶⁴² Ruwa Adamu, Maiduguri, 19/4/07.

Second, Christians are to forgive those who do them evil. This idea, which is quite related to the concept of love as mentioned above, was greatly stressed by interviewees. Much was said about the first anniversary service of Thanksgiving and Forgiveness which was held in honour of the victims of the conflict by the Borno State CAN. The Topic of the Service was FORGIVENESS and the text was from Matthew 6:15, “But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.” There was much emphasis on what the Bible teaches as response to persecution, namely, “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Matthew 5:44) and “Bless those who persecute you” (Romans 12:14). They agreed that although putting these instructions into practice is difficult, it is what the Lord expects of Christians.

Rev Garba counselled that Christian preachers must apply wisdom in the presentation of the teaching of faith during persecutions. While the preacher aims at discouraging vengeance, it must be presented carefully and with tact because Christians are also humans with emotions. He affirmed that even within Christian circles, there were different reactions to the matter of one’s response in the face of persecution because, while some Christians felt that there should be no retaliation at all, others advocated taking up arms and fighting back. He cautioned:

We are to preach the word of God to the level of the understanding of the people. When we do so, even those calling for arms will drop it. However, our method of presenting the Gospel in circumstances like this is important. You don’t just say they should not retaliate; you are to present it wisely, giving the disadvantages of violence. Teach them to know that even the heart of the enemy is controlled by God. By such persuasive preaching, people’s hearts will be touched to the level of remembering to love their neighbours as themselves, as taught in the Bible. A time like this calls for very careful and serious teaching of the people and ministers of God have a great role to play in this.⁶⁴³

Third, Christians are to live in peace and harmony with all people. According to Chia, Christians are commanded to live in peace with all men. He said:

My religion teaches me to live in harmony with everyone. The Bible says we should love even our enemies and do good to those who hate us. We are to receive one another with love. No one will leave this country for the other; I mean the Christians and the Muslims. The earlier we recognize this and accommodate one another, the better for the nation.⁶⁴⁴

⁶⁴³ Garba, Maiduguri, 21/4/07.

⁶⁴⁴ Chia, Maiduguri, 19/4/07

Fourth, the teaching of the Bible on prayer is central on the matters of living with people of other religions and in the matters of violence. Most interviewees held that the Bible calls the Christian to pray at all times and on all matters because what is impossible for man is possible for God. The Christian is taught to pray about all things, including his relationship with friends and enemies. And even though some of the theoretical principles of the Bible may appear practically difficult, through prayers, God can make all things possible. They said that prayer is very important because through it the Christian invites God to intervene in his/her crisis situations. In return, prayer creates assurance and gives confidence to the hearts of people, instead of fear.⁶⁴⁵ Also, Msheilia said that prayer would teach a Christian to be wise as to know what actions to take in times of persecution. He said: “It is important for Christians to know that persecution will not stop, so we should always pray and ask for wisdom. When they come, you don’t just run. You have to stay and fight for your right so that three small boys don’t set a whole Church building ablaze.”⁶⁴⁶ His comments show how varieties of interpretations are explored when faced with persecution. In most cultures of the world, self-defence would appear reasonable, but the overwhelming argument of the Christian respondents is to allow God to avenge.

Several responses came from Christian FGD members on the teaching of their faith vis-à-vis the conflict and relationship with Muslims. Their emphasis include: not praying against Muslims, but for them, that God would open their eyes and that they may know the Lord; following the examples of Jesus on love and peace; sharing what we have with people around us; teaching the right values of religious morality; enlightening people on how to live in peace; preaching peace and showing love to people of other religions; showing love to all people, irrespective of their religion; teaching people to live in peace with their neighbours; teaching people to do unto others as they would want others to do unto them; teaching people to pray for peace; teaching people to love their neighbours as themselves; teaching people to believe in God and do things according to His will; teaching people to love both God and

⁶⁴⁵ Garba, Maiduguri, 21/4/07.

⁶⁴⁶ Msheilia, Maiduguri, 18/4/07.

fellow men; and teaching people to forgive like Jesus forgave those who hanged him. Other Christian teaching on living with people of other religions include de-emphasizing prosperity preaching; placing more emphasis on teaching biblical morality, teaching people to focus their hearts on heavenly things and not earthly things; teaching the protection of the interests of others; and teaching that “anybody who loves God must also love His [God’s] workmanship [and that] everyone is accountable for his life and the life of his neighbour”.⁶⁴⁷

COMPARING AND CONTRASTING THE JOS AND MAIDUGURI CONFLICTS

The need to compare and contrast the two conflicts being studied is in order to determine the key commonalities and differences afforded by the conflicts for the purpose of suggesting a meaningful approach to their transformation. This shall be done under four of the emerging themes of the conflicts as already discussed above. First, there are issues on the cause of the conflicts. Second, there are matters of how the conflicts manifested. Third, there are concerns on the consequences of the conflict. Fourth, there are issues on the possibilities for peace.

Causes

First, both conflicts were between Christians and Muslims in two state capitals of Northern Nigeria, namely, Jos, Plateau State and Maiduguri, Borno State. Although by the religious distribution of Nigeria, there are people who practice the Indigenous Religions across the country, each conflict mainly concerned adherents of Islam and Christianity alone.

The study shows that in both conflicts, religion was largely seen as the cause of conflict, even though there were other factors inseparable from religion. The fact that each conflict was triggered through occasions of religious rituals is significant. The Jos conflict was activated during a *Jumaat* prayer at Congo-Russia while the Maiduguri conflict was spawned by the rally organized by Muslims to protest the

⁶⁴⁷ FGD, Maiduguri, 27/4/07.

despicable publication of Prophet Mohammed's images by the Danish newspaper, *Jollands-Posten*. Particularly in Maiduguri, all Christians interviewed strongly perceived the conflict as persecution. The fact that in that conflict only Christians' lives, homes, Church buildings and businesses were affected, firmly established the conflict in the minds of Christian interviewees as indisputably religious.

However, in both conflicts, there were other factors which were mentioned as part of the causes of the conflicts. In Jos, Muslim interviewees raised strongly the issues of ethnicity, politics and economy. In many ways, these factors could neither be separated from each other nor could they be separated from the issue of religion. For instance, in the case of ethnicity in Jos, the main issue of the conflict is the settler/indigene unresolved question in the Nigerian constitution. Yet, the settler/indigene problem of Jos is only between the Hausa/Fulani and the indigenous Birom, Anaguta and Afisere. Other settlers in Jos like the Yoruba, Igbo and Urhobo, who are there in large numbers, have no problem with the indigenous people and this could be mainly because most of these non-Hausa settlers are not Muslims. The complication comes from the fact that the majority of the Hausa/Fulani are Muslims while the majority of the indigenes are Christians. It is therefore sometimes difficult to separate religion from ethnicity in the discords of Jos. Also, there is the political dimension of the Jos conflict which complicates the issues of ethnicity and religion. For instance, in the two cases of the Caretaker Committee and NAPEP in which persons of the Hausa/Fulani group were appointed to political offices, the indigenes saw the officers in each case as non-indigenes who were imposed by government. They were never elected and so they were refused ascension to office by the indigenes. And yet in the bid to reject these government nominees, the practical experience was that it was Christian indigenes rejecting Muslim Hausa/Fulani settlers. Therefore, even that political factor cannot be understood without the ethnic and the religious dimensions. In addition, the conflicts have always been fought against religious lines and religious symbols like Churches and Mosques have become the most conspicuous targets.

Apart from the settler/indigene problem, the ethnicity problem of Jos has also manifested in what the indigenes perceive as disrespect from the Hausa/Fulani. This disregard is also often expressed through religious language. Calling a person *arne* or

kafiri is to religiously despise him/her and where these expressions have become of day-to-day usage, the people concerned cannot put up any claim apart from religion for it. This particular case of employing derogatory language to address the 'other' was experienced in both Jos and Maiduguri and in each case, Christians were the ones who felt disdained by Muslims.

In the Maiduguri conflict, apart from the religious dimension of the conflict, some strong arguments on the cause of the conflict were the issues of unemployment, poverty, foreigners and the concentration of the *almajiri* boys in town. While those points are strong, they do not displace the dominant religious outlook of the conflict. In fact, they strengthen it. Unlike in Jos, issues of ethnicity and politics never strongly showed up as cause of the Maiduguri conflict. Although interviewees made reference to the cardinal role of the Hausa 'settlers' in the conflict, it had no complications such as in Jos. Rather, the Hausa settlers were only said to be the preachers of provocative sermons, which is a religious dimension to the conflict there. And although the Igbo were the main victims of the loss of properties in Maiduguri, there was no claim of any ethnic scuffles between them and the Kanuri of Borno State or the Hausa before the conflict. Also, on the *almajiri* menace in the state, because they are apprentices of the Islamic religion, they appear to be the most visible representation of religious extremism. These *almajiri* boys are also inseparable from the *chirani* and the foreigners who come from other parts of the North, including neighbouring countries, claiming to be defenders of the Islamic religion. Therefore, the issue of youth unemployment/idleness cannot be entirely separated from the issue of religion.⁶⁴⁸

The causes of both conflicts were also linked with historical events. While the Jos conflict was related to the Dan Fodio Jihad and the rule of the Sardauna during the colonial period, the conflict of Maiduguri was linked to the Kanem Borno Empire,

⁶⁴⁸ In the course of writing up this thesis, another attack on the police, Christians and church buildings took place in Maiduguri by 'Islamists' called *Boko Haram* (Western education is forbidden) between July 26 and 29, 2009. See <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/africa/2009/07/200972913529620235.html>

which is the oldest Islamic region of Nigeria. These historical matters are strongly religious. Also, in both conflicts, causes were linked to the issues of Sharia in the country, another powerful religious matter.

It is important to mention here that the government, particularly the security agencies, were greatly indicted for both conflicts. Interviewees felt that the conflicts would have been averted or significantly mitigated, but for the ineptitude of the security agents.

Based upon the above findings, I argue in this thesis that while the conflicts of Jos and Maiduguri are quite complex, involving multiple factors, the conflicts were largely caused by the religious factor. And yet it is important to note another difference, namely, the internal and the external dimensions of the conflicts. The Jos conflict was mainly triggered by internal issues which involved Christians and Muslims but the Maiduguri conflict was generated as response to the Denmark cartoon on Prophet Mohammed. Therefore, one is local, the other is global; one national, the other trans-national, and both are mainly religious.

Manifestation

Findings show a lot of similarities in the ways the two conflicts manifested. In both Jos and Maiduguri, people were killed and wounded, although there were a higher number of casualties in Jos than Maiduguri, largely due to the duration of the conflict. While the Jos conflict lasted for five days (though only the first two days were severe), the Maiduguri conflict lasted between four and five hours. However, while in Jos both Muslims and Christians were killed, only Christians were killed in Maiduguri. Other manifestations of the conflicts include burning down of properties, especially places of worship, homes of people, shops, markets, vehicles and numerous other valuables. Yet these carnages occurred differently between Jos and Maiduguri. While in Jos properties belonging to both Muslims and Christians were destroyed, in Maiduguri, only properties belonging to Christians were destroyed. In the two cases, properties of people were stolen. Yet while in Jos Muslims and Christians mutually burgled each other, in Maiduguri, only the Christians were looted. The issue of rape was not reported in Maiduguri but this was noted in Jos. And while guns and several deadly weapons were freely used in Jos, the Maiduguri

weapons of war were mainly petrol bombs and knives.

The visibility of youths in carrying out both conflicts is worth noting. As already shown, the Jos conflict began with youths in the Congo-Russia Mosque and the course of the Maiduguri conflict featured unemployed youths and the *almajiri* prominently. The looting of shops mainly by youths in the two conflicts is suggestive of a combination of issues. It shows the level of moral decadence to which the various societies have degenerated and the economic deprivation of many people. Since most conflicts are executed by youths, and many respondents spoke about youth unemployment, it stands to reason that the economic situation of many youths facilitated the ease of their involvement in the conflicts.

Consequences of Conflicts

The duration of each conflict appears to have affected the severity of the conflicts. First, both in Jos and Maiduguri, the conflicts led to further polarization of communities between Muslims and Christians, socially and geographically. However, the intensity of the brokenness of the relationship was more vivid in Jos than Maiduguri. The CAN chairman in Maiduguri said: “We love them [Muslims] and relate with them like before. It is as if nothing happened.”⁶⁴⁹ This experience of the CAN chairman cannot be generalized as bitterness was said to have been expressed even during the first anniversary service of the conflict. Therefore, I argue here that due to the conflicts, and the concomitant mutual suspicion in the societies, Muslims and Christians have become more divided and hostility has increased. In both places there was resettlement/relocation of people along religious lines after the conflicts. The past attitude of hospitality has been radically displaced by hostility. Consequently, certain places have become ‘no go’ areas for fellow Nigerians. This is more visible in Jos than Maiduguri.

Most of the interviewees strongly condemned this principle of “divided” settlements as unhealthy, on the grounds that in some communities, during the conflicts, both Christians and Muslims took refuge in each other’s homes and confidentiality was

⁶⁴⁹ Adamu, Maiduguri, 19/4/07.

not betrayed. For example, both Sheikh Abba Aji of Maiduguri Archbishop Kaigama of the Catholic Church of Jos were said to have granted refuge to both Muslims and Christians during the conflicts. Not only did they ensure the safety of all in their care, they provided food throughout the days of fears and flight that followed. I shall comment more on these two examples of hospitality. Also, in Dadin Kowa and Nyan Shanu areas of Jos, both Christian and Muslim youths were said to have teamed together to resist any outside influence that could ignite troubles between them. Because of such instances, resettlement of people along religious lines, chiefly in Jos, has been condemned by interviewees.⁶⁵⁰

Second, the conflicts have led to increase in economic distress, expressed in various ways. Apart from the loss of jobs and the destruction of means of livelihood caused by the conflicts, there has been an unprecedented loss of breadwinners in the homes. This has left enormous effects on families. Thus there is increase in the number of widows and orphans in the communities and hardship has multiplied for many. In view of these, families have remained traumatized and family statuses have dropped greatly, with concomitant miseries. In some cases children have dropped out of school and child labour and prostitution have increased, particularly in Jos.⁶⁵¹

As at the time of the investigation, many lives appeared not to have fully revived from the shock of the conflicts. Much has been said about the destruction of the Jos Ultra Modern Market and its horrible effects on the economy of the state. Thousands of people lost their means of livelihood due to the havoc on the market. This also led to inflation and hunger in the city and its environs. Therefore, the economic distress caused by the conflicts has led to numerous other moral and social problems. Again, the conflicts in both places have placed a negative reputation on the towns. As a result, peace-loving people and potential investors were said to be avoiding the towns.

Third, in both conflicts, interviewees expressed lament on the issue of impunity. They all argued in support of bringing before the law, people who cause conflicts and participate in violence. At the end of the day, neither in Jos nor in Maiduguri was

⁶⁵⁰ Golam, Jos, 22/3/ 07.

⁶⁵¹ FGD, Jos, 28/3/07.

anyone seriously penalized for the conflicts. Interviewees hold that there should not be sacred cows in Nigeria and whoever sponsors violence of any kind, including religious violence, must be brought to book, if the nation will experience significant conflict reduction.

Prospects for Peace

The prospects for peace which I wish to discuss in this section are based on two areas of the investigation. The first concerned what ought to have been done to mitigate the conflict or what could be done to forestall future conflict, as perceived by the interviewees. The second came from what interviewees understood as the teaching of their religions regarding relationship with people of other faiths vis-à-vis the conflicts which occurred.

On the first issue of what ought to have been done or what could be done to forestall future conflict, matters which were emphasized include: intra and inter religious dialogue to foster unity and good relationship, education (religious and secular), good security systems, employment for youths, good leadership, justice, ensuring constitutional settlement of indigene/settler issues, handling migration issues with more seriousness, and assisting government with information which may lead to rapid response to distressful concerns.

There was much emphasis on the need for a dialogue forum or some form of collaborative effort which would actively involve both Muslims and Christian leaders. This was based on the interviewees' explanation of the role of religious leaders in ending the conflict in their locations. According to Murshi,

The religious leaders are well accepted by the people and they need to come together to promote peace. More than most agents of peace building, religious leaders have the agencies and resources for preaching and teaching peace. The agencies are the Churches and Mosques and other religious organizations and avenues belonging to both groups or to which they belong. Christian and Muslim leaders have the unique and unequalled opportunity of speaking to large gatherings of people every week, on Sundays and Fridays. At such times they meet with all categories of people and they can pass on the message of peace. Also, the high regard for Scriptures and the wide acceptance of same by both Christians and Muslims, provide religious leaders with the reservoir to source their message of peace for proclamation.⁶⁵²

⁶⁵² Marshi, Jos, 18/2/07.

The above elaborate view places a great responsibility for peace in Nigeria on religious leaders, based on their position within each community of faith. They represent Lederach's 'resources' of conflict transformation which I shall speak more about in chapter seven.

Concerning what the religions teach on relating with people of the 'other' religion, interviewees demonstrated a variety of perspectives. Both Christians and Muslims in Jos and Maiduguri concurred that the conflicts which occurred were not in line with their religious teachings. Therefore, when asked how the teaching of their faith could promote peace, responses were legion. They drew examples from the non-violent life of love taught and exemplified by Jesus Christ in the Bible, and the tolerance exemplified by Prophet Mohammed towards people of other faiths as written in the Qur'an and Hadith. Both Christians and Muslims emphasized the need to be responsible to God and to one's neighbours. The need for love, hospitality, peace, forgiveness, kindness, goodness, mercy, and maintaining good relationship with people of the 'other' religion was emphasized.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have attempted to present the events of conflict as they occurred in Jos and Maiduguri through the method of narrative analysis. Because accounts are presented sequentially in narrative analysis, the processes of the events have come under the themes of causes, manifestations, and consequences for each of the two conflicts. Afterwards, findings were synthesized by comparing and contrasting the Jos and Maiduguri conflicts according to the emerging themes of the data in order to note the commonalities and uniqueness of the two conflicts. A sub-section on prospects for peace followed. All these were facilitated by the NVivo computer software. Findings are intended to provide the platform for theological reflections which could assist in the transformation of conflict in Nigeria and through which the Church can be practically engaged. These theological reflections are the task of the sixth chapter of this thesis. But first, I shall consider the 'roots' of conflicts as a crucial background to these theological reflections. This is in keeping with Lederach's concept of conflict transformation as adopted in this thesis.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE POLYMORPHIC ROOTS OF RELIGIOUS CONFLICT IN NIGERIA

Introduction

This chapter examines factors underlying the perennial religious conflicts which have preoccupied Northern Nigeria and indeed, all of Nigeria, for several decades. As stated in the previous chapter, some of my interviewees mentioned these factors as sources of the conflicts of Jos and Maiduguri. As mentioned in chapter one, Lederach contends that conflict transformation involves looking beyond the ‘episodes’ of conflict into the ‘epicentres’. The immediate issues of conflicts are usually within a context which must be explored in order to envisage the desired future. The recurrence of religious conflicts in places like Kano, Jos, Bauchi, Kaduna, and Maiduguri, in my view, is an indication of the inadequacy of the various conflict handling approaches, chief of which is the failure to search for the deep roots of these conflicts.

By ‘polymorphic roots’, I mean “many forms (Greek *polymorphos*) or any one of several forms in which the same thing may occur.”⁶⁵³ The common ‘thing’ here is religious conflict and each or some and/or all of the roots treated in this chapter are capable of providing the context for the religious conflicts under investigation. In other words, for every religious conflict, these background contexts are at work and an in-depth understanding of each one is very important for any serious engagement in transforming religious conflicts in Nigeria. But there are no strict demarcations between the factors which have been examined in this chapter. Rather, there are overlaps and some of these factors cannot be neatly separated from others. For instance, it is hard to draw a line between the spread of Islam, ethnicity and religious politics in Northern Nigeria. Also, colonization appears to affect all of other factors. In addition, the factors considered in this chapter are not exhaustive.

⁶⁵³ “Polymorphic”, *The Chambers Dictionary*, 1998.

Religious Pluralism in Nigeria

One of the basic roots of religious conflict in Nigeria is the manner in which the religious traditions in the country have interacted and the way they have been manipulated for selfish interests. As already noted, the three main religious traditions of Nigeria are the indigenous religions, Islam and Christianity. Of these three, Islam and Christianity are more prominent and they have been at the centre of religious conflicts in the nation. Therefore, more consideration is given to them in this chapter than the indigenous religions. However it is notable that apart from predating Islam and Christianity in the country, the indigenous religions have contributed immensely to shaping them. Therefore, discussions on African religiosity, expressed either as African Christianity or African Islam, cannot preclude components of indigenous religions.⁶⁵⁴

Indigenous Religions

Scholars have argued that although European and Arab values have collided forcefully against African traditions and religions, significant practices in Africa have continued to be governed by indigenous traditions. Hence traditional African values are still greatly cherished in the areas of music, dress, language, and the rites of passage, although the modern forms have been significantly influenced by various factors. Even in the area of worship, despite the growing influence of Christianity and Islam, indigenous religions still thrive. Especially during life's crises, it has been argued that Christians and Muslims usually return to the indigenous religions for respite. Wande Abimbola said: "Even today, many Christians and Muslims consult *Ifa* during...the important events of their lives."⁶⁵⁵ Such consultations are made by both the educated and the uneducated; and by rural and city dwellers alike. In fact many politicians and even fighters of guerrilla armies are believed to be heavily reliant on traditional rituals for success and stability. Therefore, that despite the

⁶⁵⁴ Jacob Olupona, "African Religion", in *Global Religions* ed. Mark Juergensmeyer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 80.

⁶⁵⁵ Wande Abimbola, "A West African Cosmological System", in *Religion in Africa: Experience and Expression* eds. Thomas Blakely, Walter E.A van Beek, and Denis L. Thomas (London: Heinemann, 1994), 100.

overwhelming presence of Christianity and Islam, indigenous religions have been resilient.

Understanding indigenous religion helps one to appreciate African life. Geoffrey Parrinder said: “The study of African religion remains essential to any who would understand the background and the motive forces of African life”.⁶⁵⁶ In their various expressions, indigenous religions in Africa are perhaps the most common trait of the African people. Dond *et al* said: “Hardly can one find an African society without religion which was practiced before the advent of Islam and Christianity in Africa.”⁶⁵⁷

According to some scholars, the tolerant attitude of the AIRs as the ‘host’ religions as opposed to the conflict-laden nature of the ‘guest’ religions can be attributed to their understanding of the character of the Supreme Being who is believed to be tolerant of other powers. Though Supreme in power, he is able to allow deities to exist with him and operate at their own realms. In view of this, indigenous religions not only welcomed but accommodated Islam and Christianity for many centuries in Africa.⁶⁵⁸ Turaki described the situation thus:

[T]he ready acceptance of Western civilization, Christianity...and Islamic influences proves the fact that [indigenous Nigerian religions were] accommodative to others and should not be viewed as primitive or inferior”.⁶⁵⁹

Enwerem also speaks in favour of indigenous religions:

As a matter of fact, it is worth noting that people in Africa were not involved in religious conflicts until the intrusion by the Islamic and Christian Religions, each claiming to possess the only true god and, consequently, each less than tolerant of other religious world views.⁶⁶⁰

Although the above claim may be contested, since traditional societies cannot be exonerated from their peculiar polemics, what is important is that the violent

⁶⁵⁶ Geoffrey Parrinder, *African Traditional Religion*, 3rd ed. (London: Sheldon Press, 1974), vii.

⁶⁵⁷ Peter Marubitoba Dond, Alfred K. Dime, Major Yazela and Kefas Mavula, *The Mumuye Contemporary History and Culture* (Jos: Bible Translation Trust, 2001), 80.

⁶⁵⁸ Iheanyi M A Enwerem, *Dangerous Awakening: The Politicization of Religion in Nigeria* (Ibadan: Intec Printers Limited, 1995), 20.

⁶⁵⁹ Y. Turaki, *The Institutionalization of the Inferior Status and Socio-political Role of the Non-Muslim Groups in the Colonial Hierarchical Structure of the Northern Region of Nigeria*, PhD Thesis, Boston University, 1982, 51.

⁶⁶⁰ Enwerem, 21.

religious conflicts which have threatened the corporate existence of Nigeria have not emerged through the adherents of the indigenous religions.

Phases of Islam in Nigeria: Early Days

Scholars are not in agreement on the specific date of the arrival of Islam in Nigeria. Islam arrived in North Africa between AD 1000 and AD1100 and gradually spread to parts of present day Northern Nigeria. By the 11th and the 15th Centuries, the earliest Islamic Kingdoms had emerged as the Kanem Borno (Kanuri) Empire and the Hausa-City States respectively. The former was ruled by Kings called *Mai(s)* and the later was ruled by Kings and Queens. These two kingdoms were greatly influenced by Islam from the Maghreb and by Arabian Islamic civilization.⁶⁶¹

The flourishing Trans-Saharan trade became the main conduit for the spread of Islam and Arabic influences. Large trading colonies were established in Kano by merchants from Tripoli and there were flourishing trades between the Hausa people of the region and merchants from Timbuktu. Also, during this period, Muslim missionaries and scholars peacefully and quietly Islamized the region. By the 15th Century, the Hausa City-State of Kano already had a Muslim monarch named Mohammed Rumfa.⁶⁶²

The territories of Northern Nigeria which enjoyed the influence of the two kingdoms developed more economically, socially and politically than other parts which were outside the region. Therefore, between the 13th and the 15th Centuries, Arabian Islamic civilization had taken deep roots in shaping the Hausa City-States. As for the Kanuri, their various *Mais* helped to consolidate the people of the Lake Chad regions and the satellite south into a developed concentration of Kanuri cultural identity. However, this effort was not cheaply attained as the processes included conquests, vassalages and coordinated tribute payment. Consequently, by the 13th Century, the dominant state in the Western Sudan was the Borno Empire to which many of the Hausa City States paid tributes. As at this time, the political system established in the

⁶⁶¹ Paul Chunun Logams, *The Middle Belt Movement in Nigerian Political Development: A Study in Political Identity 1949 – 1967* (Abuja: Centre for Middle Belt Studies, 2004), 34.

⁶⁶² Jean Boyd and Shehu Shagari, *The Life and Legacy of Shehu Uthman dan Fodiyo* (Oxford: Macmillan, 2003), 2.

Kingdom was hybrid, including Islamic, traditional and Arab types⁶⁶³ Thus the Kanuri Kingdom prospered in its military, economic and political organization as the first Empire in Northern Nigeria.⁶⁶⁴

Perhaps the triumph of the Kanuri economy at this time was due to its flourishing trade in slaves with North Africa.⁶⁶⁵ Slaves from the Middle Belt Regions of Adamawa, Gombe and Bauchi became the main targets of this moving Kanuri industry. They were used as currency in exchange for large numbers of horses from Berber merchants of North Africa. The horses in turn were used as cavalry for the reinforcement of the Empire's military might. In this way, the Kanuri Kingdom became a dominant political unit in the Sudan. The apex of Kanuri solidarity was attained during the reign of Mohammed el-Kanemi, the stalwart monarch who resisted the penetration of the Usman Dan-Fodio jihad into the Empire.⁶⁶⁶

The Hausa City-States began to develop owing to their contacts with North Africa during the Sudanese Empires of Mali, Ghana and Songhai. According to the legend of Hausa origins, the Hausa City States were a product of an exodus from Baghdad through the Borno land. Their ancestor, Abuyazidu (Bayajida), on arrival at Borno, was not allowed to stay, but was given a wife by the monarch and requested to move to the regions of Daura where he domiciled. The son of this marriage, Bawo, became father of seven sons known as "Hausa Bakwai" who founded the seven Hausa City States of Gobir, Kano, Rano, Zaria, Katsina, Bauchi and Daura. According to the legend, there were also seven illegitimate children who developed the States of Kebbi, Zamfara, Nupe, Gwari, Yauri, Yoruba and Jukun. At some point in history, the illegitimate children became mixed with the legitimate children and this led to the emergence of the Hausa City-States. Due to Islamic civilization, they became developed politically and economically like the Kanuri Kingdom. Also, like the

⁶⁶³ Logams, 34-35.

⁶⁶⁴ Toyin Falola, *The History of Nigeria* (London: Greenwood Press, 1999), 19.

⁶⁶⁵ Logams, 35.

⁶⁶⁶ Ibid.

Kanuri Kingdom, the Hausa City States were consolidated by military superiority over weaker societies. Wars therefore became their endemic feature.⁶⁶⁷

The Jihad of Usman Dan Fodio (1804-1808)

Prior to 1804, the City-States had separate monarchies. Despite the commonality in language, religion, structure of power and authority, each City-State maintained its dynasty and manoeuvred its own socio-political and military agenda in a different way from others. South of the Islamic Kingdoms of the Hausa City-States were other kingdoms in Northern Nigeria, some of which had some early Islamic influence, though not of the magnitude of the Borno Kingdom or the Hausa City-States. They include the Jukun, Igalla, Nupe, Igbirra and Idoma kingdoms. And caught between the Islamic Hausa City-States and the Middle Belt Kingdoms was a varied spread of non-Islamic groups and societies with their autonomous socio-political organizations. These autonomous Middle Belt groups were a legion. The 1921 census which identified about 250 “tribes” in Nigeria reported that over 200 of them belonged to this territory.⁶⁶⁸ They were quite distinct from the Hausa and the Kanuri people of Northern Nigeria and Islamic civilization did not penetrate them.⁶⁶⁹

From the above, one begins to come to terms with the magnitude of the dissimilarities in the geopolitical, cultural and religious spread of Northern Nigeria. It is from these historical antecedents that one can appreciate certain challenges to unity, not only in the Nigerian State, but also in Northern Nigeria.

The first main advancement of Islam took place between 1804 and 1808 through the jihad (holy war) of Sheikh Usman Dan Fodio. Dan Fodio and his followers aimed at bringing the entire territory and its populace under the Qadiriyya order. Dan Fodio himself initially belonged to the Sufi brotherhood which was founded by one Abdul Qadir Jelani in the 12th Century. By their religious commitment, the Sufi sheikhs sought to distance themselves from extravagance, worldliness, greed, ostentation, accumulation and desire for power. They maintained a simple lifestyle and abhorred

⁶⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁸ Ibid., 35-49.

⁶⁶⁹ Ibid., 50.

misrule and corrupt practices.⁶⁷⁰ In view of this, the oppressive, unjust and exploitative rule of the Hausa dynasties of that time became grounds for Dan Fodio's campaign. In six years of war, his movement defeated the territory which covered a vast portion of present-day Northern Nigeria. The area conquered also extended to parts of Niger Republic, Cameroun and Burkina Faso.⁶⁷¹ And although the countries of Africa had not been partitioned at this time, the independent state created by Dan-Fodio's Islamic revivalism was significantly sizable.⁶⁷²

The victory of the jihad was widespread, but it did not cover all of Northern Nigeria. For instance, a large portion of the Hausa community known as the *Maguzawa* successfully resisted the jihad and continued in their traditional religions. A similar resistance was met by the jihadists when they attempted to conquer the Kanem-Bornu Empire which was already a numerically dominant Islamic group. Apart from these, the jihad was unable to conquer most parts of the Middle Belt Region because it was strongly resisted by the indigenous people, giving Islam only a partial success in the area. As such, even to the present period, the people of this region have continued to resist all that the advocates of the jihad stood for. To the South West, the jihad stopped at the outskirts of Ilorin; and it never reached the South Eastern part of Nigeria.⁶⁷³ Consequent to his conquest of a huge part of Northern Nigeria, Dan Fodio instituted his vision of Islamic administration on the societies and made Sokoto his capital. He and his successors firmly imposed Hausa as the lingua franca and established an unprecedented Islamic theocratic state which was administered under Sharia law.⁶⁷⁴

Islam under Colonial Government

Between 1804 and 1900 when British influence became significant in Northern Nigeria, there were disparities in the development of the region. The areas which

⁶⁷⁰ Boyd and Shagari, 7.

⁶⁷¹ Ewerem, 22.

⁶⁷² Boyd and Shagari, 1. They claimed that Dan Fodio's conquered extent could be equated with three times the size of the United Kingdom.

⁶⁷³ Ewerem, 23.

⁶⁷⁴ Ibid.

adopted Islam were more socio-politically developed than the parts which rejected it, particularly the Middle Belt. Consequently, British influence benefited the Islamic areas while the Middle Belt regions remained underdeveloped and subordinated to the Islamic societies. In spite of this, these minority ethnic groups continued largely to resist both religious and political incorporation into the Northern political society. Thus they faced political exclusion from the Northern Islamic societies and it led to serious socio-economic predicaments for them.⁶⁷⁵

Unifying Islamic Communities

Another dimension of Islamic growth in Nigeria is the affiliation between the North-West and the North-East. The Kanuri people of Kanem-Borno, who had earlier resisted Dan Fodio's jihad and Hausa-Fulani political domination, became incorporated into the Islamic politics of the North between 1900 and 1950. During this period of colonial administration, the three political regions of Nigeria functioned independently of one another. In the North, Islam was intermixed with governance and the vision of the Northern leaders was to have a Northern Nigeria which was united as one Islamic community.⁶⁷⁶ Thus, the most outstanding Northern Nigerian politician of the 1950s and early 1960s, Sir Ahmadu Bello, strove to 'win' the Middle-Belt area of the North both religiously and politically. According to Paden,

He [Bello] feels it is a duty to undertake conversion campaigns among the 'pagan/polytheist' communities of the north. He becomes in the eyes of many the 'leader of Muslims' (*Sarkin Musulmi*) that he had always aspired to within the Sokoto Caliphate.⁶⁷⁷

He was so committed to this cause that when in 1959 he had the privilege of moving from the region to ascend to central power as Prime Minister, he rejected the offer, supporting Tafawa Balewa while he remained the regional Premier, to control both regional and national politics from his base in Kaduna. Thus "Bello stressed the

⁶⁷⁵ Logams, 29 -30. See Ewerem, 23. For details on the *Ningawa*, see Adell Patton's "The Ningi Mountains of Northern Nigeria, 1846-1902 in *The African Frontier* ed. Igor Kopytoff (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 193-313.

⁶⁷⁶ Roman Loimeier, *Islamic Reform and Political Change in Northern Nigeria* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1997), 3. See also *Power and Diplomacy in Northern Nigeria, 1804-1906*, (New York: Humanities Press Inc., 1971), by R.A. Adeleye, 7.

⁶⁷⁷ John N. Paden, *Ahmadu Bello: Sardauna of Sokoto* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1986), 530.

political and religious ideas of Usman Dan Fodio as an example for his own policy and tried to consolidate the political unity of the North in order to unite the area on a religious basis.”⁶⁷⁸ However, the military coup of 1966, which led to the murder of Bello and the ensuing civil war, destroyed this political foundation and expansion zeal. Regions were dissolved and twelve federal states were created. This began the process of weakening the North and the emancipation of Nigeria from Northern oligarchy.

In the 1950s also, there was increased agitation for the creation of a Middle Belt Region by the Northern ethnic minorities. This was due to the experience of acute inequality, deprivation and perceived marginalization. This colonial impropriety, which caused serious tensions in the North, had its roots in the pre-colonial resistance of Islam by the people of the Middle Belt. The period between 1940 and 1967 witnessed the formation of ethnic identity groups which became a part of the Middle Belt Movement.⁶⁷⁹

With the death of Bello (1966), the Civil War (1967-70) and the creation of twelve states (1967), Islamic expansion through political manoeuvring became curtailed. Therefore, since the 1970s, Muslims have carried out bitter struggles to centralize Islam in the federation. Loimeier puts it thus:

Muslims’ insistence in acknowledging the cultural symbols of Islam and the brutality of the clashes of the 1970s and the 1980s were a sign that the Muslims in Northern Nigeria reacted with increasing awareness to the changes in the social, political and economic structure of the federation.⁶⁸⁰

In other words, the increasing realization of the impossibility of having a federation patterned after the vision of the great Islamic leaders, namely, Dan Fodio and Bello, has culminated in pressures on the nation to conspicuously accommodate Islamic symbolism. Failure to achieve this has led to ‘brutal clashes.’ This phenomenon is germane for understanding religious conflicts in contemporary Nigeria. Both Kevin and Golam resonated on it during my interviews in Jos.

⁶⁷⁸ Loimeier, 6-7.

⁶⁷⁹ Logams, 30-31.

⁶⁸⁰ Loimeier, 9-10.

Islam in Western and Eastern Nigeria

Among the Yoruba, there are various versions to the advent and spread of Islam. Ade Ajayi has argued that contacts between the Yoruba and Islam date back to around the eleventh or twelfth century through Lamurudu and Oduduwa, the ancestors of the Yoruba who migrated to Ile-Ife from Mecca. Thereafter, through trade influence with the Kanuri of Borno, the Yoruba were persuaded to adopt Islam.⁶⁸¹ However, it was not until after the jihad of 1804 that Islam began to have strong effects. The jihad had spread up to Ilorin through the activities of the Fulani during the reign of Afonja. From Ilorin, Islam spread to other parts of Yoruba land.⁶⁸² Thus Ilorin became the main gateway of the spread of Islam to the Yoruba land.

As for the Eastern part of the country, Islam hardly made any significant penetration before colonial incursion and even afterwards, its impression has been scanty. However, due to internal migration, many Muslims from the North have settled in the Eastern parts of the country and have made Islamic presence conspicuous there. Easterners are also settled all over the North and this is significant for understanding religious conflict in Nigeria.

Islam and Revitalization Programmes

One main process of Islamic expansion in Northern Nigeria has been through its revitalization/reform (*tajdid*) programmes. It has been argued that the main purpose of the jihad of 1804 was to reform the laxity of Muslims and not to convert pagans,⁶⁸³ but when it culminated in the establishment of the Sokoto Empire, Dan Fodio and his brother Abdullahi decided to officially outline the state's dogma under the Sufi brotherhood of the Quadiriyya.⁶⁸⁴ In spite of this effort, when Dan Fodio

⁶⁸¹ J.F. Ade Ajayi, "Religious Pluralism And Tolerance Among The Yorubas", USAAfricaDialogue@googlegroups.com, September 13, 2006, 3.

⁶⁸² L. S. Olorude, "The Politicisation of Religion in Nigeria" in *Religious and Doctrines: Nigerian Studies in Religious Tolerance* eds. C.S. Momoh *et al*, Vol.1, 1989, 352-377

⁶⁸³ Murray Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate* (London: Longman, 1967), 273.

⁶⁸⁴ Louis Brenner, "Concepts of Tariga in West Africa: A Case of the Quadiriyya" in *Charisma and Brotherhood in African Islam* eds. D.B. Cruise O'Brien and Christian Coulon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 47.

died in 1817, his idealistic concepts were discontinued, until they were revamped in the era of his grandson, Sir Ahmadu Bello. Before then, several systems which had been dropped, like cattle taxation and other burdensome charges, were re-introduced. There arose a growing discontent for the Sokoto Sultanate by Hausa leaders. Some people exercised their discontent by defecting from the Quadiriyya brotherhood to the new Tijaniyya *tariqa* which was established by al-Hajj Umar Tal al-Futi in the 1830s. This led to a serious reaction from the political establishment of Sokoto to the end that affiliation with Tijaniyya by emirs was punished with deportation. To Sokoto's disappointment, the emirs of Zaria, Katsina and Kano publicly affiliated themselves with the Tijaniyya, thus claiming quasi emancipation from the spiritual hegemony of Sokoto.⁶⁸⁵

The climax of the Tijaniyya revitalization came in the 1940s under Ibrahim Niass and by the 1950s, the Tijaniyya brotherhood had metamorphosed into a strong religious movement. Because of the success of the Tijaniyya, revitalization was also started among the Quadiriya by Nasiru Kabara, a Kano-based scholar. Both Kabara and the Tijaniyya groups interpreted their movements as programmes of reform and the purification of Islam. Their activities continued into the 1960s.⁶⁸⁶

In the 1970s, a new movement of *tajdid* emerged under the leadership of Sheikh Abubakar Gumi (1922 -1992), former Grand Kadi of Northern region and religious adviser to Ahmadu Bello. Like Kabara and Niass, Gumi emphasized the cleansing of Islam through Islamic education. This led him to founding the *Jama 'at Izalat al-Bid'a wa-Iqamat as-Sunna* (the Association for the Eradication of the Innovation and the Establishment of the Sunna; Hausa '*Yan Izala*'). With this new group, Gumi turned against the two Sufi brotherhoods. In order to fight a common enemy, the Quadiriyya and the Tijaniyya had to shelve their disagreement and confront the advances of the *Yan Izala*, the Nigerian version of radical Islamic movement. Although the fight between Gumi and the Sufi brothers brought some disunity among Muslims in Nigeria, Gumi's insistence on the education of women and their participation in

⁶⁸⁵ Loimeier, 13.

⁶⁸⁶ Ibid.,14-16.

politics paid off as the Sufi brothers had no choice but to join in the campaign. Loimeier summarized the situation as follows:

Through their open disputes, Abubakar Gumi and his opponents did not only achieve a greater sensi[t]ization of Muslims concerning religious issues [,] [t]hey also-willingly or unwillingly-contributed to a stronger politicization of Islam in Nigeria.⁶⁸⁷

Therefore, the reform agenda became a potent agency for the re-orientation and expansion of Islam religiously and politically. And while the Sufi (Sunni) Islamic brotherhoods have the largest following in Nigeria, the Shiite (Shia) version of Islam also has a significant following and it has contributed enormously to Islamic consciousness in Nigeria. By their activities, the Nigerian Shiites, under Sheikh Ibraheem Zakzaky and Abubakar Mujahid, have promoted the cause of Islamic revolution in which society is to be reclaimed for the Muslim faith.⁶⁸⁸ Their presence has increased Islamic strength in the nation.

Christianity in Nigeria

Scholars have traced the earliest attempts to establish Christianity in Nigeria to the period between the 15th and the 18th Centuries through Roman Catholic missionaries from Portugal, Italy and Belgium. But whatever took place then failed to survive. The concrete accounts of Christianity in Nigeria are therefore rooted in the various missionary attempts of the mid-19th Century.⁶⁸⁹ Before that time, most of the efforts to take Christianity into the area were unsuccessful, especially due to the booming slave trade.⁶⁹⁰ However, when Christianity eventually penetrated the country, its journey to the North was through the South. Although the Niger Missions began their work in the North around the same time, Christianity, as it has spread in Nigeria has been more of a movement from the South to the North. Given the fact that Islam penetrated the country from North to South, the 'middle' belt of the country has been a melting pot of crisis between the two religions. In order to understand the dynamics

⁶⁸⁷ Ibid., 17.

⁶⁸⁸ "Nigeria Christian/Muslim Conflict", Global Security.org , 18/10/07.

⁶⁸⁹ Enwerem, 23.

⁶⁹⁰ Falola, *History of Nigeria*, 40.

involved in religious conflict in Northern Nigeria, it is pertinent to briefly examine how Christianity penetrated the South.

Christianity in the Yoruba Land

Ayandele and Ajayi have traced the history of Christianity in Nigeria to the mid-19th century through Badagry. Quite notable during this period were the efforts of liberated former slaves who had become converted to Christianity during their stay in Europe, America and other places. Upon their settlement in Sierra Leone after the 1807 Act of Parliament on the abolition of slave trade in the British Empire, many of them traced their roots to Nigeria and brought Christianity with them.⁶⁹¹ Because the largest of the seventeen nations which settled in Sierra Leone was Yoruba, many of them found their way back to Badagry, Lagos and Abeokuta. These ex-slaves saw themselves as being saved from death/slavery and given the opportunity for a new life. Oduyoye recalled Fyfe's description of the situation as follows: "Abandoned by their own gods who had failed to protect them in their homeland, they came up from the hold of the slave ship like Jonah from the whale, cut off from their old life, ready to be reborn into a new".⁶⁹² The Yoruba people of Nigeria referred to them as 'Saro' while in Sierra Leone, they were known as 'Aku', a derivation from Yoruba greetings.⁶⁹³

The most prominent of these freed slaves was Samuel Ajayi Crowther whose work, as we shall later see in this chapter, covered all the regions of Nigeria. Crowther it was, who translated the Bible into the Yoruba language and conducted the first Christian worship in the Yoruba language in Freetown on Sunday, January 3, 1844.⁶⁹⁴

Modern missionary enterprise in Nigeria commenced in the founding of a Methodist Mission in Badagry through the efforts of Thomas Birch Freeman and William de Graft, a Fante Christian, in 1842. Freeman proceeded to Abeokuta in answer to the

⁶⁹¹ Enwerem, 23.

⁶⁹² Modupe Oduyoye, "The Planting of Christianity in the Yorubaland : 1842 -1888" in ed. Ogbu Kalu *Christianity in West Africa, the Nigerian Story* (Ibadan: Daystar Press, 1969), 248.

⁶⁹³ J.F. Ade Ajayi, *Christian Missions in Nigeria: 1841 – 1891* (London: Longman, 1965), 25.

⁶⁹⁴ Oduyoye, "The Planting", 251-252.

invitation of some freed slaves who had returned there. This refutes speculations that Christianity was imposed upon a reluctant people by missionaries. Actually, modern missionary movement in Nigeria began before the arrival of the European missionaries and at the behest of the infant congregations begun by freed African slaves. Abeokuta was a central place of settlement for most of the freed slaves and Badagry was important because it was a sea port of arrival for the returnees.⁶⁹⁵

The CMS (Church Missionary Society) also established a post at Abeokuta in 1846 through the combined efforts of Rev Henry Townsend and Rev Samuel Ajayi Crowther.⁶⁹⁶ However, effort to convert the Badary people met with little success as the people were deeply interested in the slave trade, which the missionaries stood against.⁶⁹⁷ From Abeokuta, the CMS moved to Ibadan in 1852.⁶⁹⁸ In 1850, Thomas Jefferson Bowen, an American Baptist missionary, arrived through Badagry. By 1855, he had a mission post in Ogbomoso.

Christian influence in Lagos was not as early as in Abeokuta. This was because the freed slaves who first returned avoided Lagos where slave trade was still going on. But in 1851, the British force bombarded Lagos and deposed Kosoko, the king, who was a notorious slave driver. Akintoye was made to sign a treaty of ending slave trade and thereafter, reinstated as the king of Lagos. It was at this time that the missionaries began to penetrate Lagos. The CMS, Methodist and Baptist missions were the earliest Christian influence on Lagos. Afterwards, thousands of emigrants from Sierra Leone, Cuba and Brazil entered Lagos, bringing the different strands of Christianity.⁶⁹⁹

The spread of Christianity in the Yoruba land has had a significant bearing on Christianity in Northern Nigeria. For instance the spread of Baptist Christianity in Northern Nigeria has been significantly carried out by Yoruba traders and civil

⁶⁹⁵ Ibid., 255-256.

⁶⁹⁶ Elizabeth Isichei, *A History of Christianity in Africa* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1995), 171.

⁶⁹⁷ Oduyoye, 257-9.

⁶⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 270.

⁶⁹⁹ Ibid., 281-289.

servants who found themselves as settlers in the North. Their entrance into the core north predates the advent of Western Baptist missionaries. In every major city in Northern Nigeria, prominent Yoruba speaking Baptist congregations are found. These Churches in turn have helped to establish indigenous and 'English' speaking Churches in the North. They have also had great influence on Northern Nigerian education through their primary and secondary schools/colleges. This kind of influence of the Yoruba Churches is not limited to the Baptist, but also found among Anglican, Methodist, Catholic, Presbyterian and the AIC (African Independent Church) Churches which are spread all over Northern Nigeria.

The Niger Mission and Christianity in Northern Nigeria

Northern Nigeria is a very diverse area, not only in topography and climate, but also in traditions, cultures and religions. Studies show that even though Christian missionary works of the mid 19th Century were concentrated in the South, interest in penetrating Northern Nigeria had always been nursed. According to Ayandele:

Northern Nigeria was of a special romantic and strategic interest for Christian missions...There was the advantage of healthy highlands contrasting with the prostrating coastal areas. Moreover the writings of Edward Wilmot Blyden, the well known pan-Africanist Negro missionary of Liberia, whose authority on Islam was respected, made missionaries sanguine on the possible conversion of the inhabitants of Northern Nigeria. Blyden emphasized time and again that Christianity could easily incorporate Islam, for Muslims were already half-Christians...⁷⁰⁰

Christianity in Northern Nigeria is traced to the beginning of colonization. While British intrusion into Africa after the abolition of the slave trade was primarily to find markets for their new industries, there were also churchmen who had genuine evangelistic motives for the region. One of such Churchmen was Henry Venn, Secretary of the CMS between 1841 and 1872. The CMS, based in London, had a considerable influence on the British Government.⁷⁰¹ For Venn, he looked forward to the evangelization of the interior with the anticipation of establishing a "self-governing", "self-supporting", and "self-extending" Church.⁷⁰²

⁷⁰⁰ E.A. Ayandele, *The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria* (London: Longmans, Green and Co Ltd., 1966), 120.

⁷⁰¹ J.F. Ade Ajayi, *Christian Missions*, xiv.

⁷⁰² E.P.T. Crampton, *Christianity in Northern Nigeria* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1979), 16.

It all began in 1840 when people in Great Britain who claimed to have an interest in Africa came together to form the Society for the Extinction of Slave Trade and Civilization in Africa. The society mounted pressure on the British Government to develop Africa through an alternative export system to Slave Trade and through the propagation of Christianity. This led to the expedition of three ships to the Niger in 1841, popularly called the First Niger Expedition. Among those on the trip was Rev J.F. Schon of the CMS and Samuel Ajayi Crowther, then a young catechist: an indication of a strong connection between the British Government and the CMS. Its purpose was to introduce sustainable and legitimate trade to the basin of Rivers Niger and Benue and to establish a Model Farm at their confluence. Unfortunately this trip was hampered by the illness and death of many of the voyagers due to malaria and other strange illnesses. Consequently, the Model Farm was a failure and no mission station was established.⁷⁰³

Despite these discouragements, Schon would not be deterred. Rather, he pressed for the training of African evangelists and this led to the establishment of a Training College in Freetown in 1842. This school became as famous as the Fourah Bay College in Freetown where Samuel Crowther had enrolled as the first student in 1827 and afterwards worked as teacher. The pioneer students of this Training College were occupied with various language studies which were considered needful for the evangelistic task of the Niger area. Crowther learned and specialized in his native Yoruba, Schon studied Hausa, Archdeacon Henry and Rev C. Paul learned Nupe, P.J. Williams learned Igbirra and S.W. Koelle studied Kanuri.⁷⁰⁴ In 1843, Crowther was ordained in London as the first Anglican priest of Sierra Leone and afterwards, posted to Yoruba land as a missionary.⁷⁰⁵

In 1854, through a joint venture of Macgregor Laird and the British Government, another expedition was made to the Niger which was more successful than the first. The purpose of the mission was to establish legitimate trade and to introduce the Christian religion into the Niger and Benue areas. A third expedition took place in

⁷⁰³ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁴ Ibid., 17-18.

⁷⁰⁵ Isichei, *History of Christianity*, 171.

1857 in a combined effort of the Government, the CMS and several commercial interests.⁷⁰⁶ At this time the All-African Niger Mission was founded and Crowther became head.⁷⁰⁷ It was also at this time that Crowther secured permission to establish a station at Igbebe, near Lokoja. In 1862, eight adults and a child were baptized there, signifying the first baptismal ceremony in Northern Nigeria.⁷⁰⁸

In 1864, Crowther was consecrated Bishop of Western Equatorial Africa beyond the Queen's Dominions. Though he resided in Lagos and his southern work was more successful, Crowther spent a substantial amount of time moving around from the Delta to Nupe land. The CMS missionaries continued to work in partnership with the Royal Niger Company (RNC) until 1900 when the British Protectorate of Northern Nigeria was proclaimed. Sir Fredrick Lugard was appointed the first High Commissioner and from that time, the RNC became limited to solely commercial activities.⁷⁰⁹

In view of this, missionary activities moved through Jebba to Zaria where the Emir warmly welcomed the missionaries. It happened that this Emir had already incurred the displeasure of the Sultan of Sokoto and so the coming of the British was perceived by him as divine intervention on an impending dethronement. Exhilarated by the warm reception in Zaria, the missionaries advanced to Kano where Emir Aliyu treated them in the most contemptuous way. He sent them away from Kano and they barely escaped with their lives. On their return, the missionaries remained for some time at Girku but in 1905, they returned to Zaria where they remained for many years for their work to slowly develop. Upon their return to Zaria, the warm reception they had initially received from the Emir had disappeared.⁷¹⁰ According to Ayandele, "In the Zaria district, not up to twenty converts were made by the CMS missionaries between 1900 and 1914."⁷¹¹

⁷⁰⁶ Crampton, 18-19.

⁷⁰⁷ Isichei, *History of Christianity*, 171

⁷⁰⁸ Crampton, 19.

⁷⁰⁹ Ibid, 20-38.

⁷¹⁰ Ibid., 129.

⁷¹¹ Ayandele, *Missionary Impact*, 133.

However, there was a small group of Muslims living in a village some 25 miles from Zaria who had earlier converted to a form of Christianity, following the teaching of one Arabic scholar called Mallam Ibrahim. Ibrahim was impaled on a stake in the market place in Kano by Muslims on the charge of blasphemy in 1867. Based on what he claimed to be his in-depth study of the Koran, Ibrahim upheld the superiority of Isa (Jesus) over all the other prophets including Mohammed. After his death, his scattered disciples continued to uphold his teachings even though they were greatly persecuted by Muslims. Known as “The Children of the Israelites” (or *Isawa*), about 160 members of this group made contact with Dr. Walter Miller in Zaria in 1913. In 1914, Miller and the *Isawa* found a new settlement at Gimi, but they were soon befallen by the tragedy of sleeping sickness in 1919 which practically eliminated the adults.⁷¹² The older boys and girls of this community were taken to the CMS School in Zaria and together with other converts in the area, became the nucleus of the Church in Hausa land. Some of the products of these missionary efforts include Dr. R.A.B. Dikko, the first Northern Nigerian Medical Doctor, Prof. Ishaya Audu, the first Nigerian Vice Chancellor of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Dr. (General) Yakubu Gowon, former Nigerian Head of State and Miss Maude Miller, first Northern Nigerian lady to become a school principal.⁷¹³

Despite the disappointment which missionaries met with in Kano, their work reached several parts of Northern Nigeria. The Toronto Industrial Mission was allowed to occupy Pategi in 1899 and together with the CMS, they were warmly received in Bida. In 1905, The Mennonite Brethren of the USA were allowed to begin work in Ilorin and in the same year, the CMS was invited by the Emirs of Katsina and Kontagora for missionary work. The mission was unable to take advantage of the opportunity due to lack of personnel.⁷¹⁴

In his efforts to establish missions in Northern Nigeria, Baptist missionary Thomas Jefferson Bowen attempted to penetrate through Ilorin. In 1855, he visited the Emir from Ogbomoso and requested permission to live there. The Emir refused to grant

⁷¹² Isichei, *History of Christianity*, 273.

⁷¹³ Crampton, 131.

⁷¹⁴ Ayandele, *Missionary Impact*, 142.

him permission, insisting that the missionary should only visit him from Ogbomoso.⁷¹⁵ With that, the early Baptist missionary move into the North was stalled.

The extended development of Christian congregations in the Muslim North came with the amalgamation of the Northern and the Southern Protectorates in 1914. Because people from the South were educated, they were employed by government and posted to work in the North. Consequently, Christian places of worship developed all over the North. However, most of the Churches were restricted to the *Sabon gari* (new towns) designated for settlers. By 1961, there were 33 Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) mission stations in Kano, Kastina and Sokoto Provinces but only few Hausa people attended. Also, the Roman Catholic Mission (RCM) had large congregations in the North while the Sudan United Mission (SUM) worked in Maiduguri among the Kanuri. Thus in the core of Northern Nigeria, the majority of Christians were immigrants.⁷¹⁶

In Central Nigeria the SIM, led by Bingham around 1900, and the SUM, under German Karl Kumm, had a fertile ground to blossom and flourish. The SUM had made it a policy to work among the ‘pagan’ tribes of Northern Nigeria. Despite their initial disasters, the SIM succeeded in having about 550 foreign missionaries and 101 major stations by 1958 among the various ethno-linguistic groups there.⁷¹⁷ SIM became known as Evangelical Church of Western Sudan (ECWS) and later, Evangelical Churches of West Africa (ECWA). SUM metamorphosed into Church of Christ in Nigeria (COCIN or EKAN, *Ekkilisian Kristi a Nigeria*). Some of the ethnic groups that first became Christians were greatly instrumental in the conversion of others to Christianity.⁷¹⁸ The move towards Christianity in this area was greatly spurred by awareness of the value of Western education and the attraction of modern

⁷¹⁵ Ibid, 30.

⁷¹⁶ Bengt Sundkler and Christopher Steed, *A History of the Church in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 256.

⁷¹⁷ Ibid.

⁷¹⁸ Peter Clarke, “Birom Woman Evangelist, Vo Gyang of Forum (fl. 1927-9)” in *Varieties of Christian Experience in Nigeria* ed. Elizabeth Isichei (Hong Kong: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1982). He gives an account of the heroic female missionary adventure of Vo Gyang of the Birom stock of Forum and her work in Ganawuri in 1927, 171.

life. Christianity blossomed greatly in Central Nigeria after Nigerian independence in 1960.⁷¹⁹ Kalu summarized the spread of Christianity in this area thus:

The fact was that the Jihad of 1804 did not conquer all of the communities in the north; many un-Islamized ethnic groups became Christian under the evangelical missionary impulse of the Sudan United, Sudan Interior Missions, and Dutch Reformed Christian Mission”.⁷²⁰

Among the Tiv, the most populous Middle Belt group, the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa arrived in 1911 but made no noticeable impact for decades due to its emphasis on the Tiv language. Therefore, when the Catholic Church came around 1930, it established several schools and taught in English. After a few decades, this approach appeared convincing to the people.⁷²¹

Christianity in the Ibo Land

Among the Igbo, some liberated African slaves from Sierra Leone made a significant impact. This was apparent when Crowther arrived in Igbo land from the Yoruba land in 1857. It was also a time when the city states of the region had been divided by many wars. Crowther moved his capital to Onitsha and was assisted by John Christopher Taylor, an impressive counterpart and a Sierra Leonean of Igbo origin. They relied heavily on the provision of education as a tool for Christianizing the people and ensured good relationship with the rulers and elders of the people.⁷²²

In 1885, the arrival of two French Catholic missions brought a great challenge to the 30 years’ domination of the CMS on the Niger. Although this led to some unhealthy rivalry between the two missionary organizations, Christian missions and education grew rapidly in Eastern Nigeria.⁷²³ Churches that later penetrated the region include the Presbyterian, Methodist and Qua Ibo missions.⁷²⁴

⁷¹⁹ Isichei, *History of Christianity*, 274-275.

⁷²⁰ Ogbu Kalu, “Sharia and Islam in Nigerian Pentecostal Rhetoric, 1970-2003”, *Pneuma*, 26, 2, 2004, 6.

⁷²¹ Sundkler and Steed, 257 – 259.

⁷²² Ibid., 242-244.

⁷²³ Ibid., 248- 251.

⁷²⁴ F. K. Ekechi, *Missionary Enterprise and Rivalry in Igboland: 1857-1914* (London: Frank Cass, 1972).

Colonialism in Nigeria

The imposition of Colonialism⁷²⁵ has become a significant factor in understanding Nigerian history. Sealed at the Berlin Conference of 1884-5, the colonial administration mapped out its socio-political strategy for achieving its economic objectives. That construct partly became the foundation for religious conflicts in Nigeria.

Scholars have traced the formation of Nigeria in stages. It began with the annexation of Lagos by the British in 1861. Thus, the incursion was from the South to the North.⁷²⁶ In 1886, the British Crown chartered the Niger Territories under the Royal Niger Company; the Crown Colony and the Protectorate of Lagos (Yoruba Protectorate), administered from Lagos; and the Niger Coast Protectorate which was governed from Calabar. Thus before 1900, there were three units under the jurisdiction of the British Government and each had a separate administration. In 1900, the Northern Protectorate was formed and in 1906, the two Protectorates in the South were merged. In 1914, the Northern Protectorate and the Colony and Protectorate of the South were amalgamated into what came to be known as Nigeria. The amalgamation at this point was more theoretical than practical because each of the two units was administered separately.⁷²⁷

The purpose of the amalgamation has been contested and many conclude that it was not primarily in the interest of Nigerians, but for the imperialist powers to have convenient access to facilitate their exportation/exploitation of goods from the North through the coast.⁷²⁸ Also, it has been argued that the amalgamation was because the British government wanted to discontinue the subsidy for the budget of the North by

⁷²⁵ George Klay Kieh, "The Context of Civil Conflict in Africa" in *Zones of Conflict in Africa: Theories and Cases* eds. George Klay Kieh Jr. and Ida Rousseau Mukenge (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2002), 22.

⁷²⁶ Rotgak I. Gofwen, *Religious Conflicts in Northern Nigeria and Nation Building: The Throes of Two Decades, 1980 – 2000* (Kaduna: Human Rights Monitor, 2004), 58.

⁷²⁷ Alex Gboyega, "Nigeria: Conflict Unresolved" in *Governance as Conflict Management: Politics and Violence in West Africa* ed. I. William Zartman (Washington D.C.; Brookings Institution Press, 1997), 154.

⁷²⁸ Bolanle Awe, "Conflict and Divergence: Government and Society in Nigeria", *African Studies Review*, 42, 3, 1999, 8.

transferring the budget surplus from the South to the North. This issue significantly set the ball rolling for the revenue allocation conflicts which would engage a good part of the century afterwards.⁷²⁹

In 1922, a Legislative Council to legislate for the colony in the Southern Provinces was set up in Lagos and expatriates ruled directly. However, in the North, the indigenous people were allowed to rule themselves as British administration was instituted on the principles of Indirect Rule. Even when on April 1, 1939, under Governor Bernard Bourdillion, the Southern Provinces colony was further divided into two administrative units, comprising of Eastern and Western Provinces, there was still a separate system of governance between the two Southern Provinces and the Northern Province.⁷³⁰ Thus a tripartite system was created which was to carry on until independence in 1960.⁷³¹

Anifowose has given two reasons for the success of the Indirect Rule system in the North. First, the North was already a stratified society and its population was made up of the ruling class and the 'rank and file' peasantry. Second, there existed a measure of social immobility which made it difficult for people on the lower social strata to move on to a higher one. In view of this, the people were subjects of their Emirs who themselves had allegiance to the Sultan of Sokoto.⁷³² As opposed to the Northern experience, indirect rule did not quite succeed in Southern Nigeria. This was partly because the above mentioned factors which enabled it to succeed in the North were hardly in place in the South. Anifowose argued further that even though the Yoruba kingdoms were characterized by highly established central authority, outright autocracy was precluded. In the case of the Igbo of South Eastern Nigeria, the indigenous political system of dispersed authority made indirect rule practicably

⁷²⁹ Gboyega, 153-154.

⁷³⁰ Remi Anifowose, *Violence and Politics in Nigeria: Tiv and Yoruba Experience* (Enugu: NOK Publishers, 1982), 32.

⁷³¹ Jude C.U Aguwa, *Religious Dichotomy in Nigerian Politics* (Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishing Co. Ltd; 1993), 14.

⁷³² Anifowose, *Violence and Politics in Nigeria*, 32.

unsuitable. Consequently, until the introduction of the Richards Constitution in 1946, the North and the South virtually had no political contact between them.⁷³³

This dichotomy in the pattern of the colonial administration is considered to have greatly affected the way Nigerian politics came to be viewed by the people of the different regions. Aguwa recalled some of the consequences of the dual administrative strategies in the words of Gambari as follows:

The result was that the South, on the one hand was ever more open to the modernizing influence of the expanding overseas trade, religion and education, all on Western lines...The North, on the other hand, remained obedient to the Islamic pattern of government which had prevailed for a century before the coming of the Colonialists and which largely prevented the spread of those outside influences which were rapidly changing the intellectual and physical face of the South.⁷³⁴

In other words, the colonial administration did not significantly alter life patterns in the North while so many things were changing in the South. Gofwen argues that the relatively stabilized 'feudal oligarchic' structure in Northern Nigeria impressed the colonial government, which saw the method as profitable for its 'Indirect Rule' system. In view of this it became a matter of colonial policy not to tamper or interfere with the existing structures in the North. Rather, the systems were energized and made accountable to the colonial government.⁷³⁵ Aguwa concluded that this implied the endorsement of the hegemony of the Sokoto Caliphate and its retention of Islam as an instrument of political and religious propaganda when the Nigerian state finally emerged.⁷³⁶ Further on this, Gofwen said:

In order to sustain this principle of non-interference [in the North], the colonial government had to adopt some policies which themselves served to directly prop Islam officially. Specifically, the spread of Christianity and the activities of missions within emirates were prohibited. Rather, they were all restricted in the North to the Pagan areas.

Thus the colonial government was directly involved in religious developments in the nation; allowing Christian influence in the South and "pagan North", but disallowing it in the Islamized North. Lugard has been quoted to have said specifically on this:

⁷³³ Ibid.

⁷³⁴ Aguwa, *Religious Dichotomy*, 15.

⁷³⁵ Gofwen, *Religious Conflicts*, 59.

⁷³⁶ Aguwa, *Religious Dichotomy*, 15.

It is unwise and unjust to force missions upon [the] Mohammedan population, for it must be remembered that without the moral support of the Government the people have the cause to disbelieve the emphatic pledges I have given that their religion shall in no way be interfered with.⁷³⁷

So, the foundation of the present-day religious conflicts in Northern Nigeria can be traced to the emergence of the nation state. The seed of religious discord was planted by the colonial government which gave administrative cover for the survival, growth and spread of Islam. Gofwen again contends that there were other procedures which were promoted by the colonial government in the interest of the Islam. They include the prohibition of the teaching of the Christian faith to children of Islamic parents who were under the age of eighteen years; the 440-yard rule which kept missionaries out of the vicinity of the local people; policies on 'unsettled' areas which restricted missionary activities; and government policies on the renewal of leases, which made it difficult to build permanent structures in the core North.⁷³⁸ This background is important for the analysis of religious conflicts in Nigeria.

Another aspect of the colonial legacy which promotes conflict is the structural imbalance in the mapping of the country. In size and population, the Northern Region alone was larger than the combination of the Southern regions.⁷³⁹ That automatically caused the North to dominate federal politics despite the fact that the South remained more educationally and economically developed.⁷⁴⁰ Many have wondered why the colonial administration refused to allow the creation of the Middle Belt Region which the minority people strongly agitated for. Therefore, the retention of the oneness of the North, despite serious agitations for a split, helped to concretize the geographical imbalance of the country and gave the Islamic areas power and advantage over the Middle Belt minorities. This has remained a source of religious conflicts in Nigeria.

⁷³⁷ Olorude, 361- 362,

⁷³⁸ Gofwen, *Religious Conflicts* , p. 62-63. See also J.H. Boer's *Christianity and Islam Under Colonialism in Nigeria* (Jos: ICS, 1988).

⁷³⁹ Crampton, 2. See J. D. Falconer, *The Geology and Geography of Northern Nigeria* (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1911) in which he described the Northern boundaries.

⁷⁴⁰ Anifowose, 32-33.

Ethnicity and Citizenship in Nigeria

Nigeria as a nation is a fusion of several nation states with different ethnic identities. Many of these ethnic groups had maintained loose contact with one another prior to their union into a nation.⁷⁴¹ The creation of the nation was unmindful of matters of crucial importance to the different segments that came to make up the country. That in itself has become a key factor to various kinds of tensions in Nigeria. The amalgamation wove together people of different independent ethnic kingdoms. Among the major ethnic groups, the Yoruba inhabit the South Western part of the country, and the Igbo occupy the South East. Historically, the Igbo were never organized into large states or kingdoms like the Yoruba. Due to their decentralized system, they have been described as a 'stateless society'. The largest ethnic group in the country is the Hausa/Fulani. It is also the most politically powerful and the people occupy the open grassland of the Sudan Savannah. Apart from these three dominant ethnic groups, smaller significant groups include the Tiv, Bini, Ibibio, Nupe, and Kanuri, just to mention a few. The Middle Belt of the country has the highest concentration of the smallest ethnic groups⁷⁴² and Jos is one of the major cities of this area.

As already mentioned, by the mid 1930s and 1940s, the three regions operated different styles of administrations, which led to suspicion and animosity between the ethnic groups.⁷⁴³ After the amalgamation of 1914, Northern Nigeria was allowed to adopt its 'pre-amalgamation' Islamic structures politically, economically, and socially, and to extend it beyond its original frontiers. The Middle Belt zone which had strongly resisted the jihad was incorporated into the same geo-political structure with the rest of the Islamized North by the colonial administration. By this singular action, colonialism became an instrument for accomplishing what Jihad had failed to do.⁷⁴⁴ Muslim, Hausa-Fulani rulers were imposed on these communities, mostly

⁷⁴¹ Adewole Segun Banjo, "Nigeria: An Overview of Multifaceted Conflict" *Through Fire With Water: The Roots of Division and the Potential for Reconciliation in Africa* in eds. Erik Doxtader and Charles Villa-Vicencio (Asmara: African World Press, 2003), 91.

⁷⁴² Banjo, "Nigeria", 89-90.

⁷⁴³ See Larry Diamond, "Class, Ethnicity and Democratic State: Nigeria, 1950 – 1966", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 25, 3, July 1983, 457-489.

⁷⁴⁴ Gofwen, *Religious Conflicts*, 124-125.

Christians and adherents of indigenous religions, and this has continued to breed revolt and contestation in the North.

The Northern People's Congress, which was the Northern political party at independence, formed a pro-Islamic government. Muslim culture was stratified as superior to the "pagan" culture of the minorities. In the Native Administrative System, non-Muslims were not allowed to rise beyond the level of village head. The Native Authority in non-Muslim areas was also made subordinate to the Native Authority in the Muslim areas. In view of this, the Northern government deprived the non-Muslim people of social amenities and economic opportunities.⁷⁴⁵ Also, the Hausa/Fulani changed the names of many minority ethnic groups in the region to suit their demeaning perception of them and some of the identity struggles of immediate post-independence were to strip minority groups of such "Hausanized" appellations.⁷⁴⁶

Again, because Christian activities were highly restricted in Northern Nigeria by the colonial government, to the 'pagan' ethnic groups, religion became established along ethnic divides.⁷⁴⁷ Again, the colonial government adopted the policy of "strangers' settlement" for migrant Southern/Christian groups in Muslim cities and this helped to concretize ethnic division between the Hausa/Fulani and others. On this settler/indigene divide in Kano, Gofwen recalled Albert's comment as follows:

The relationship between the Kanawa and the Southern Nigerians in Kano would probably not have been so bad had the British not introduced the Sabon Gari Policy (of residential segregation around 1911). This policy of 'separate development' forced the two people to live apart in manners that made it difficult for members of the ethnic groups to interact...the colonial government made it punishable for anybody to live outside the area demarcated for people of his region. Within a few years of its establishment, the settlement became formerly stigmatized as the abode of 'Kafiri' (infidels) and social misfit by the Kanawa.⁷⁴⁸

⁷⁴⁵ A.E Ekoko and L.A Amadi, "Religion and Stability in Nigeria" in eds. J.A Atanda, G. Ashiwaju and Y. Abubakar *Nigeria Since Independence: The First 25 Years, Volume IX Religion* (Ibadan: Heinmann Education Books, 1989), 114 -115.

⁷⁴⁶ Ogoh Alubo, *Ethnic Conflicts and Citizenship Crises in the Central Region* (Ibadan: PEFS, 2006), 35-36.

⁷⁴⁷ Gofwen, *Religious Conflicts*, 130.

⁷⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 131

Furthermore, because the regions were divided in 1946 along ethnic lines as North (Hausa), East (Igbo) and West (Yoruba) by the colonial constitution, ethnicity and regionalism became entrenched into Nigerian politics, which continued until and beyond independence. Political parties which were created to take over from the colonial administration were formed along similar ethnic lines.⁷⁴⁹ Therefore, throughout the emergence of Nigeria from colonialism to a republic, the political consciousness of Nigerians has not been to think of themselves first as Nigerians, but as Yoruba, Igbo or Hausa and so on.⁷⁵⁰ It was to this ethnic tripod that the colonial administration granted independence in 1960 and ever since, Nigeria has continued to grapple with the perennial problems of ethnicity and citizenship.

The First Republic witnessed the agitation of several minority groups who were suppressed under the three dominant ethnic groups. This led to the creation of the Mid-West Region out of the Western Region in 1963, to make a fourth Region in the country. However, it has been argued that the creation of the Mid-West Region was more to weaken the Western Region politically than to truly redress the concerns of the minority groups since, by the same reasoning, the Middle Belt Region ought to have been carved out of the North. However, after that time, more States and Local Government Councils have continued to be created in the country in response to the demands of various ethnic minorities. Yet the addition of these structures, though satisfying some yearnings, often leads to fresh majority/minority problems.⁷⁵¹ These ethnic problems have given context to the issue of religious conflict in Nigeria.

Another matter related to ethnicity is citizenship in Nigeria. The colonial administration did not adequately address the problem of citizenship in the new nation. Alubo said: "A telling manifestation of the unresolved issues of citizenship is the recent upsurge of ethnic and religious conflicts and attendant killings that have dogged the restoration of civil rule."⁷⁵² Nigeria has come out of the military dictatorship which repressed the manifestation of the difficult challenges of

⁷⁴⁹ Aguwa, *Religious Dichotomy*, 15.

⁷⁵⁰ Anifowose, 34.

⁷⁵¹ Alubo, *Ethnic Conflicts*, 56-58.

⁷⁵² *Ibid.*, 33.

citizenship. Hence, violent competition for access to state power has led to various conflicts. The questions of who can be voted for and who can hold what office within a given state have yielded many ethno-religious conflicts. This scenario has been made more complex by the feature of Nigeria's ethnic mix resulting from internal mobility and migration. Many southerners live in the north and northerners in the south. Therefore, while all Nigerians are accepted as citizens, people are perceived either as *indigenes* or 'settlers' in the states. To complicate issues, the federal constitution does not indicate for how long one can be in a place before having the rights of indigenization.

Islam and Politics in Northern Nigeria

In Nigeria, Islam has a clear, long intermix with politics as shown in the Dan Fodio Jihad. But despite Islamic and Hausa/Fulani hegemony in Northern Nigeria, Enwerem identified three significant events that caused Christianity to threaten the Islamic ruling class in the wake of Nigerian partisan politics. First, a group of educated, northern Christians was emerging, who were products of missionary efforts from the non-Muslim regions of Northern Nigeria and the thought of non-Muslim Northerners possessing such education was enough to send fears into the Muslim North. Second, these educated Christian Northerners emerged with unprecedented political ambition. For instance, Dr. Dikko, a Fulani Christian, founded the Jamiyar Mutanen Arewa (JMA-Association of Northern People). Thus, the prospect that Northern Christians would rule over Muslims was inconceivable to the Northern rulers. Third, there was the emergence of anti-authority politics in the 1940s. An example of this was Sa'adu Zungur, who had been influenced by radicalism during his studies at the Yaba College of Technology. He became the father of radical politics in Northern Nigeria and his group produced figures like Mallam Aminu Kano, Abubakar Zukogi and Mallam Lawan Danbazzau. Through them, the first political party of Northern Nigeria was organized under the name Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU). Among these people were commoners (*talakawa*) who joined to stand against injustices in the Northern

emirate. Going by the prevailing Northern aristocracy, this political party was a major threat.⁷⁵³

In handling their opposition, the rulers quickly dislodged NEPU politicians by accusing them of un-Islamic practices. Their interactions with the Christian South were projected as fraternity with infidels (*Kafirai*). Also, with the aid of the British, Dikko's political organization was hijacked and changed into the Northern People's Congress (NPC) and Dikko himself was removed from the mainstream. The Sultan of Sokoto became the patron of the party and Sir Ahmadu Bello, grandson of Usman Dan Fodio, became the party leader. Following the advice of Sharwood Smith, the Governor of the North in the 1950s, the party brought in indigenous Northern Christians in order to give a united front of "One North" against the South. This strategy led the NPC to assume the leadership of the country's first post-colonial government and to entrench religious politics into the Nigerian system.⁷⁵⁴

Between 1960 and 1966, Northern Nigerian politics was dominated by the religious charisma of the Sardauna of Sokoto, Sir Ahmadu Bello; the Premier of the region. According to Enwerem, Ahmadu Bello's politics "emanated from, revolved around, and rebounded from his sincere religious conviction and commitment."⁷⁵⁵ His idea was different from what politicians from the South conceived as important. While for Southern politicians, independence gave room for Nigerians to be ruled by Nigerians, the Hausa-Fulani class wanted Nigerians to be ruled by Nigerians as approved by the Hausa-Fulani ruling class, which was Islamic. For Bello, the task he saw before him was not merely to put in place the pre-colonial Islamic rule, but to complete the jihad which was considered to have been interrupted by British colonization. Therefore in the North, Bello sought to harmonize the entire people of the region under Islamic leadership. To actualize this programme, he started a number of Islamic organizations, notably the JNi (Jamaatu Nasril Islam – Society for the Victory of Islam) which began in 1962/3. The JNi was an organization of Northern Muslim intelligentsia which was founded for the expansion of Islam and the teaching of

⁷⁵³ Ewerem, 34.

⁷⁵⁴ Ibid, 34-35.

⁷⁵⁵ Ibid, 50.

Islamic doctrines.⁷⁵⁶ All the Caliphate Emirs, Muslim Parliament members and top Government officials were invited to the inaugural meeting in Kaduna in August, 1963. Through government and philanthropic donations, the organization was established. The Kuwaiti and Saudi Arabian governments donated generously for its launch. The post of President General went to Sir Ahmadu Bello and the first Nigerian Prime Minister, Tafawa Balewa, promised the organization a donation of £1 million although his administration collapsed before this was actualized. Despite the proclamation of JNl as a body for religious matters, it soon became manifest that its goal was equally political. Thus, it became an agent of the political struggle of the North against the South. After the coup of January 1966, JNl was shaken by the death of Bello, but continued to mobilize Muslims in the country for Islamic and political activities. In 1973, it spread South among Yoruba Muslims, merging with the West Joint Muslim Organization (WESIOMO) to form the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA), and yet retaining its identity as JNl in the North. As a group, it has manifestly stood in opposition to CAN, particularly in the North. JNl and NSCIA jointly promoted the cause of Nigerian membership in the OIC and mobilized huge propaganda efforts in defence of government on the issue.⁷⁵⁷

Between 1967 and 1975 when Gowon was Head of State, Muslims succeeded in their political manoeuvres. Having won the Civil War in 1970 against the Igbo who were predominantly Christians, the victory of the federal troops was seen as a Muslim victory by the Muslims. During his reign, Christian institutions were taken over by the government, and Pilgrims' Boards were set up exclusively for Muslims.⁷⁵⁸ However, the creation of the twelve states in 1967 was seen as emancipation from Hausa hegemony, particularly in the Benue-Plateau State. Thus, J.D. Gomwalk, the Military Governor of the state, sought southern assistance in the establishment of the University of Jos and the *Nigerian Standard* newspaper as opposed to the suggestions of Ahmadu Bello University and the *New Nigeria* press

⁷⁵⁶ Paden, *Ahmadu Bello*, 549.

⁷⁵⁷ Toyin Falola, *Violence in Nigeria: The Crisis of Religious Politics and Secular Ideologies* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 1998), 105-106.

⁷⁵⁸ Ewerem, 66.

respectively, both of which were already perceived as agencies of Hausa-Fulani manipulation.⁷⁵⁹ These factors help to understand present-day conflicts.

Sharia in Muslim Life and Politics

According to Ogbu Kalu, Sharia is the “wool and the weft of the Islamic faith and the core of its ethical system”.⁷⁶⁰ He observed that its intricacy lies in its divine and human sources as represented by the Qur’an and the Prophet’s Sunnah. Dean Gilliland also says that “Sharia is the sum total of the Muslim way of life. Literally, it is ‘the trodden path’ leading to peace and submission. Sharia therefore, is the core of Islam, and strict obedience to sharia is the essence of Islam”.⁷⁶¹ However, there is flexibility in its application because it stresses the contextualization of rulings (*muzahib*) by judges to reflect people’s self-understanding.⁷⁶²

As far back as the time of Dan Fodio’s jihad, the establishment of the Sokoto Empire became the focal point for the establishment of sharia. Thus, in most parts of Northern Nigeria under Sokoto influence, Islamic values controlled legal, administrative and educational systems.⁷⁶³ By the time of Dan Fodio’s death, he had created “a community of Muslims observant to the Qur’an, Hadith, and the four schools of Islamic Law (Hanfi, Maliki, Shafi’I and Hanbali).”⁷⁶⁴ Also, by the time of the British incursion and colonization of Nigeria, Islamic institutions and ideology were already permanent features in parts of Northern Nigeria. They became acknowledged as part of the Native Authority Ordinance.⁷⁶⁵ Islamic Law continued as a result of the British mandate and it became beneficial for the colonial Indirect

⁷⁵⁹ Ibid., 67.

⁷⁶⁰ Kalu, “Sharia and Islam”, 243.

⁷⁶¹ Dean S. Gilliland, *African Religions Meet Islam: Religious Change in Northern Nigeria* (Lanham: University Press of America, Inc., 1986), 187.

⁷⁶² Kalu, “Sharia and Islam”, 244.

⁷⁶³ Peter B. Clarke and Ian Linden, *Islam In Modern Nigeria: A Study of Muslim Community in a Post-Independent State 1960-1983* (Kaiser: Entwicklung & Frieden, 1984), 12.

⁷⁶⁴ Kirsten Walles, “Shari’a and Politics Since 1999” in *Nigeria in the Twentieth Century* ed. Toyin Falola (Durham: Carolina Academic Press, 2002), 658.

⁷⁶⁵ John Alembillah Azuma, *The Legacy of Arab-Islam in Africa: A Quest for Inter-religious Dialogue* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2001), 106.

Rule System.⁷⁶⁶ Sharia has therefore been a part of Nigeria since the emergence of the nation state.

In 1947, the status of sharia faced its first major challenge when the appeal trial of one Tsofo Gubbia, through the British Colonial code, disallowed the imposition of death penalty as provided by sharia for homicide.⁷⁶⁷ Another public experience with the issues of sharia occurred in 1958 when the *Nigerian Citizen* newspaper published an internal debate among Muslims which threatened its continuity.⁷⁶⁸ However, it was not until General Gowon was ousted in 1975 that the matter of sharia assumed a frightening central position in Nigeria's political journey. One of the topics proposed to the national Constituent Assembly was the adoption of Islamic Law into the new constitution. This meant that a Federal Sharia Court of Appeal (FSCA) was to be established. This recommendation, more than anything else, polarized the assembly. By 1979, a walkout staged by eighty-three pro-sharia members of the assembly led to the dropping of the issue of the FSCA. Also, this strategy backfired as it became a major instrument for Christian unity in the nation. However, in 1988-'89 and 1991, the sharia controversies arose again as Muslims sought to add it into the federal constitution.⁷⁶⁹

In all the debates on sharia by the assemblies, the superior argument of those who insisted on excluding it from the constitution prevailed. In frustration at this 'crush', some Northern states unilaterally decided to enlarge the scope of sharia. Thus on January 27, 2000, the governor of Zamfara State, Ahmed Sani, officially announced that sharia legislation would be extended from personal law to all aspects of life including the penal code.⁷⁷⁰ Until then, state governments had operated sharia law as provided in the 1979, 1989 and 1999 federal constitutions in which the scope of sharia was restricted to Islamic personal laws such as inheritance, marriage, divorce,

⁷⁶⁶ Walles, "Shari'a and Politics", 656.

⁷⁶⁷ Banjo, 93-94.

⁷⁶⁸ Kalu, "Sharia and Islam", 245-246.

⁷⁶⁹ David D. Laitan, "Sharia Debate and the Origins of Nigeria's Second Republic" *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 20, 3, 1982, 411-430.

⁷⁷⁰ Abdulkader Tayob, "The Demands for Shar 'ah in African Democratisation Processes: Pitfalls or Opportunities?" in *Comparative Perspectives on Sharia in Nigeria* eds. Philip Ostien, Jamila M. Nasir and Franz Kogelmann (Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited, 2005), 45.

wills, and custody of children. By 2002, the Zamfara initiative had spread to eleven other Northern states in the country. As sharia courts started issuing judgments, the crisis of the Nigerian state deepened.⁷⁷¹ Its implementations included sentencing people to death by stoning, body amputation and flogging. The situation was highly criticized both nationally and internationally and people have wondered if the aim is to benefit the moral lives of individuals or an attempt to map out an Islamic territory.⁷⁷²

It has been argued that the issue over sharia is most contested not within the legal or civil domains, but in the political sphere. Therefore, sharia is perceived mainly as instrument of retaining political control. But further examination of the situation has also revealed that the main protagonists of sharia come from a collaboration of Muslim youth groups, imams and intellectuals whose aim is to invest the civil religion of the country with Islamic symbols.⁷⁷³ Those who proposed sharia maintained that: “the new legal system will clear the way for a radical restructuring of a system of justice that has failed, considering the current high level of crime, moral decadence and anti-social behaviour in the society”.⁷⁷⁴

It has been noted that the most ominous part of the sharia implementation is the pressure that is being put on Christians and other non-Muslim minorities in the states which have adopted the system. It has been argued that sharia goes beyond the judiciary.⁷⁷⁵ Its implementation includes a vast spectrum of daily life. Danny McCain has observed:

Apparently prostitution laws and even alcohol laws apply to everyone in some states, regardless of their religion. This is certainly not to excuse Christians who participate in such social vices. However proponents of sharia must clarify what does and what does not apply to Christians. Surely, the recent closing of Churches and the refusal to allow the teaching of Christian Religious Knowledge in public

⁷⁷¹ Ruud Peters, *Islamic Criminal Law in Nigeria* (Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited, 2003), 13-15.

⁷⁷² Wallis, 655.

⁷⁷³ Tayob, “The Demands”, 45.

⁷⁷⁴ Remi Oyo and Toye Olori, “Nigeria: Sharia Controversy Far From Over”, web article posted on IGC, <http://www.igc.org/igc/pn/hl/100030714766/h17.htm>. See also Ibraheem Suleiman, “Sharia Restoration in Nigeria: The Dynamics and the Process”. Paper delivered at the International Conference on Sharia, held at the Commonwealth Institute, London, accessed by internet, http://www.sharia2001.nmnonline.net/ibrahim_041.html.

⁷⁷⁵ Tayob, 50.

schools in core Northern states must not be part of sharia. These kinds of practices have hurt the credibility and fairness of those promoting sharia.⁷⁷⁶

As a result of such experiences, Christians in these states have called on the governments to recognize the religious plurality of the states. Some scholars have argued that the solution to this debacle might be in a concession which may lead to a constitutional review to reflect Nigeria's cultures and traditions. However, any such arrangement in the Nigerian polity must recognize and respect Nigerian religious plurality.⁷⁷⁷ McCain summarized the feelings of the generality of Christians in the nation as follows: "Christians have responded to sharia with resignation, fear, frustration, and anger that has sometimes boiled over into violence".⁷⁷⁸ The violence has mainly been in view of a perceived Islamic domination of Christianity as experienced in Kaduna in February 2000 after the sharia protests.⁷⁷⁹

Adewole has also observed that the April 1979 street protests in Zaria and Kaduna towns with banners such as "No Sharia, No Peace...No Nigeria", and the burning of Churches in Kano in 1982 which marked the first open violence between Muslims and Christians, were rooted in the sharia debate.⁷⁸⁰ In the same vein, Gboyega contends that after the sharia issue was voted down in 1979, Muslim *Ulama* vowed to redress the injury. Consequently, organized radicalism and sectarian interests arose among Muslim youths both in the higher institutions of learning and in Koranic schools. This has also been matched by militant responses from Christian youths in the higher institutions.⁷⁸¹ The sharia issue has been left hanging in the air; hence, there is no uniform legal system in operation in the country.⁷⁸²

⁷⁷⁶ Danny McCain, "Which Road Leads Beyond the Shari 'ah Controversy? A Christian Perspective on Shari 'ah in Nigeria", in *Comparative Perspectives on Sharia in Nigeria*, eds. Philip Ostien, Jamila M. Nasir and Franz Kogelmann (Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited, 2005), 25.

⁷⁷⁷ Crampton, 265.

⁷⁷⁸ McCain, "Which Road ?", 7-8.

⁷⁷⁹ Ibid., 8.

⁷⁸⁰ Banjo, 93.

⁷⁸¹ Gboyega, 192.

⁷⁸² Tayob, 44-50.

The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC)

In 1986, twenty-one years after the establishment of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), Nigeria was clandestinely registered as a member state by the Babangida administration. The aim of the OIC is to unite Islamic nations politically and economically. Member nations are required to pay their membership dues and also have the opportunity of interest-free loans. According to Falola, “The creation of the OIC was a part of a larger movement to create a strong Islamic forum for discussing development and fighting the West.”⁷⁸³

The move to obtain Nigeria’s membership of this organization had been there from the onset. In 1969, Nigeria was invited to the Morocco meeting but General Yakubu Gowon, wrapped up in the Nigerian Civil War, sent a delegation of observers. The Morocco meeting was specifically informed that the Gumi-led delegation was representing only the Muslim population, not the state of Nigeria. Thereafter, invitations for Nigeria to join the organization fully were rejected by subsequent Nigerian leaders after Gowon. However, Babangida surreptitiously pushed the country into the organization and in January 1986, a French news agency broke the news that Nigeria had been registered as the forty-sixth member nation of the OIC. To the amazement of Nigerians, key institutions and personalities who should have been able to speak on the issue were dumbfounded. Even the second in command of the junta, Commodore Ebitu Ukiwe, told the nation in a public statement that he was unaware of the decision, which most people concluded was the reason for his removal from office a few weeks after.⁷⁸⁴

President Babangida claimed the matter had been discussed by the AFRC, but the Chief of Staff denied that information. For a long time the nation was in the dark on this issue and up till now, it is in doubt whether any public report of Nigerian membership has been confirmed or denied. At an early stage, the editor of *New Nigeria* wrote:

The Federal government has yet to confirm or deny the story of our admission. It would appear as if discussions were not held on a matter as sensitive as this and that

⁷⁸³ Falola, *Violence in Nigeria*, 94

⁷⁸⁴ Ibid, 94-95.

is worrying... [If it is true that Nigeria is a member] the government should not fight shy of saying so.⁷⁸⁵

For most Nigerians, *New Nigeria* newspaper is perceived as pro-government and pro-North. If OIC membership remained shrouded to its editor, then to the rest of Nigerians, only ignorance of the matter could be assured.

The OIC issue led to national crisis as leaders of the two main religions responded predictably. While the Christian leaders called for an immediate withdrawal from the organization, Muslim leaders hailed its continuation.⁷⁸⁶ People like Peter Y. Jatau, the Catholic Archbishop of Kaduna, Professor Aluko, the renown Nigerian economist, and Tanko Yusuf, all publicly reminded the government of the unconstitutionality of the decision taken, based on the 'secular' status of the country. However, these appeals fell on deaf ears.⁷⁸⁷ Several Church groups also reacted to the country's OIC membership and called for immediate withdrawal. According to Falola:

The [Catholic] bishops felt the OIC issue had soured the relations between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria, making it difficult to build a united country based on equity social justice, and respect for human rights regardless of religion. The bishops were disappointed that the government had even admitted to OIC membership without acknowledging that it should have consulted the public before joining. They affirmed without any ambiguity that 'we do not and shall not agree to Nigeria's membership of the OIC'. It dismissed all the government's justification as unconvincing.⁷⁸⁸

However, many Muslims stood in firm justification of Babangida's administration and called on Christians to be tolerant of the development.⁷⁸⁹ Also, Dr Lateef Adegbite, the General Secretary of the NSCIA confirmed Nigeria's full membership of the organization.⁷⁹⁰ Some time later, *News Exchange* reported Nigeria's withdrawal⁷⁹¹ from the OIC but the government of Abacha announced in April 1998

⁷⁸⁵ Editorial: "The OIC Affair", *New Nigeria*, Jan 27, 1986, 1.

⁷⁸⁶ Jan A. Boer, *Christian: Why This Muslim Violence?*, (Belleville: Essence Publishing, 2004), 95.

⁷⁸⁷ *New Nigeria*, 27/1/ 1986, 28.

⁷⁸⁸ Falola, *Violence in Nigeria*, 100.

⁷⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 97.

⁷⁹⁰ *Punch*, May 5, 1991.

⁷⁹¹ *REC News Exchange*, October 1991. See also Helen Chapin Metz's "Nigeria: Introduction", http://www.workmall.com/wfb2001/nigeria/nigeria_history_history_introduction.html.

that Nigeria was a full member.⁷⁹² Among Christians in Nigeria, there was great suspicion of foul play in Nigeria's OIC membership. Numerous documents were circulated, the truth of which could neither be denied nor verified. People were left to draw conclusions in ways they found suitable.⁷⁹³ This led to a period of tension and religious crises in the country. Falola said: "In every way, Nigeria's entry into the OIC turned out to be a costly miscalculation. The resulting controversy polarized the country along the religious divide more than had any other issue in Nigerian history."⁷⁹⁴ In another account, Falola said:

Babangida clandestinely pushed the country into the organization. A period of prolonged tension followed as Christians interpreted the move to turn the country into an Islamic state. In later years, Christians and Muslims engaged in major clashes in a number of cities.⁷⁹⁵

Supporting this view, Kirsten Walles said, "This new alliance [OIC] re-emphasized the cohesion of the Muslim community and the division between the Nigerian Christians and Muslims. Extreme rioting and violence between these two religious communities escalated during the 1980s and the 1990s."⁷⁹⁶ Thus the OIC issue becomes a valid foundation for religious tensions in Nigeria. Falola described the indeterminate state of the OIC issue as follows:

To this day, the government has been walking on tightrope on the OIC issue; in order to satisfy Muslims, it has not officially withdrawn its membership; and to satisfy Christians, it has refused to play an active role in the OIC or to advertise its participation in the organization...al-Shari'a is not applied nationally, and Nigeria continues to be officially a secular state. Christians remain convinced that the Islamic intelligentsia has not given up its agenda of Islamization and the power-centred manipulation of religious issues. With most outstanding issues unresolved, opportunities for violence and aggression are legion."⁷⁹⁷

From the above one can feel the pulse of the twin Islamic symbols of Shari'a and OIC, dangerously ignored, like some explosives, awaiting either detonation or defusing.

⁷⁹² James B. Kantiok, *Muslims and Christians in Northern Nigeria: Political and Cultural Implication for Evangelism*, Unpublished Dissertation manuscript for Fuller Theological Seminary, 1999, p. 261.

⁷⁹³ Boer, *Christian*, 263-4.

⁷⁹⁴ Falola, *Violence in Nigeria*, 95-96.

⁷⁹⁵ Falola, *The History of Nigeria*, 187-188.

⁷⁹⁶ Walles, 657.

⁷⁹⁷ Falola, *Violence in Nigeria*, 102.

Christianity and Politics in Northern Nigeria

The main entrance of Christians into modern Nigerian politics began in the first half of the twentieth century. At this time, both Southerners living in the North and the non-Islamized Northerners felt marginalized by the Hausa /Fulani hegemony and 'Northern System' of government. In view of this situation, the Northern Christian minorities and their missionary partners sought ways to survive in the hostile environment through ecumenical meetings. After preliminary meetings in 1910 and 1913, a major one was held in 1948 at Bukuru where the various Churches of the North came together to form what has been described as a Northern Christian Movement. The main decision of this meeting was for Christians to begin to raise the political consciousness of their people and to mobilize them against the political manipulations of the Islamic ruling class of the North. With that development, Northern Christians were encouraged to participate on the main stage of the Nigerian political drama.⁷⁹⁸

Another phase of Christianity and politics in Nigeria is tied to the Nigerian Civil War. On January 15, 1966, a military coup organized mainly by Christian officers, led by Major Chukwuma Nzeogwu, toppled the first republic and brought to power General Aguiyi Ironsi, the most senior army officer, also a Christian. In what he claimed to be an attempt to dissolve the ethnic divides which had characterized the first republic, Ironsi introduced the unitary system, disbanding the regions. His Unification Decree of 1966 was viewed by a cross-section of Nigerian Muslims as a plot by Southerners to subordinate the North to Christianity. Although this claim was denied by Ironsi, he could not convince his accusers of a non-religious interpretation of the unitary system. Six months later, in July of the same year, Ironsi was assassinated in another coup led this time by Northern officers. During this saga, the indiscriminate killing of Southern officers, mainly Igbo, and the tensions which arose thereafter, culminated in the Nigerian Civil War.⁷⁹⁹

⁷⁹⁸ Enwerem, 30-31.

⁷⁹⁹ Afe Adogame, "Politicization of Religion and Religionization of Politics in Nigeria" in *Religion, History and Politics in Nigeria* eds. Chima J. Korie and G. Ugo Nwokeji (Lanham: University Press of America, 2005), 127.

Under the leadership of Colonel Emeka Odumegwu Ojukwu, the Biafrans, predominantly Christians, fought unsuccessfully for thirty months to secede from Nigeria on the grounds of marginalization and inequitable treatment in the allotment of national wealth. The Biafrans saw themselves as both Christian and anti-Muslim, and publicly declared their stand, drawing from the manner of Sir Ahmadu Bello's pre-1966 militant Islamic pronouncements.⁸⁰⁰ Thus, during the war, an overwhelming support for the Biafran side came from the WCC, the Catholic International Relief Agency, and major Church organizations in Western Europe and North America who saw a religious angle to the whole conflict.⁸⁰¹ Also, *The Economist* magazine reported: "...the Christian East was being subjugated by Muslim Nigeria in a final jihad ..."⁸⁰² Thus, although the Nigerian Civil War was fought due to a combination of factors, there were definitely strong religious undertones to it. The civil war events therefore portend a major convergence of religion and politics in Nigeria.

Under Olusegun Obasanjo, a Christian Southerner and former military ruler, religion became more conspicuous and activism increased. This caused the period to be characterized by numerous acts of ethno-religious violence. Several factors are responsible for the sudden political awakening among Christians in Nigeria. They include: increase in religious violence against Christians, perceived Muslim domination of power, the unjust distribution of the country's wealth, the inclusion of Nigeria in the OIC, the threat of the inclusion of the Shari'a in the constitution and the posture of Northern Nigerian politics. More than anything else, these factors have increased the political consciousness of Christians in the nation.⁸⁰³ In view of this, CAN and its auxiliaries⁸⁰⁴ took a radical stand from a state of apathy to that of conscious involvement in politics.

⁸⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁰¹ Roy M. Melbourne, "The American Response to the Nigerian Conflict, 1968", *Issue, A Journal of Opinion*, Vol. 3, No2, Summer, 1973, 33-35.

⁸⁰² Adepitan Bamsaiye, "The Nigerian Civil War in International Press", *Transition*, No 44, (1974), p.31.

⁸⁰³ Adogame, "Politicization of Religion", 129-130.

⁸⁰⁴ CAN is composed of five member groups which sometimes operate at their auxiliary levels.

Through the years, CAN became the major Christian agency of political mobilization. Although the organization started in 1976, by 1986 its activities had become very well known in the country. Kalu has identified major contributions of the Pentecostal brand of Christianity to this larger Christian body in Nigeria. According to him, the Pentecostal group in Nigeria significantly prompted CAN into political consciousness and helped to put an end to the ambivalent disposition of the mission Churches to the question of Christian involvement in partisan politics. The Christian environment soon became charged with what Kalu described as ‘a political theology of engagement’.⁸⁰⁵ CAN also debunked earlier missionary teachings which encouraged Christians to shun politics and began to campaign for active Christian participation, reminding them that they were ambassadors of Christ and of God on earth.⁸⁰⁶ According to CAN:

The Christian is a citizen of heaven but also an ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ here on earth. In this capacity he is expected to be light to a dark world and salt to a sour community. Christians as a community in Nigeria have failed in their ambassadorial responsibilities.⁸⁰⁷

Churches and pastors became more politically conscious and this ignited a strong political awakening among Nigerian Christians. In view of this, CAN has tirelessly been in battle with government, particularly in the North, whenever anti-Christian attitudes are perceived.⁸⁰⁸ A portion of one CAN publication in 1988 gives a summary of one of the struggles of CAN against the anti-Christian ethos as follows:

Our schools and colleges have been taken over by government and yet we see schools and colleges established under the umbrella of another religion [Islam] being sponsored and entirely administered by government; we have been denied access to the use of the electronic media in certain parts of the country and yet another religion [Islam] has the monopoly of rendering a near 24-hours religious broadcast in the same areas; some States have deliberately refused to accept and recognize the growing population of Christians in the State...⁸⁰⁹

⁸⁰⁵ Ogbu Kalu, “The Religious Dimension of the Legitimacy Crisis, 1993-1998” in *Nigeria in the Twentieth Century* ed. Toyin Falola (Durham: Carolina Academic Press, 2002), 683.

⁸⁰⁶ Adogame, “Politicization”, 131

⁸⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁸ Falola, *Violence in Nigeria*, 112-113.

⁸⁰⁹ Christian Association of Nigeria, *Leadership in Nigeria (To Date): An Analysis*, Kaduna, CAN Publicity, Northern Zone, 1988, 42.

CAN made public the one-sided manner in which appointments of people into top government offices were made since the inception of the nation. This was instigated by Babangida's reshuffle of his cabinet in December 1989, filling it mainly with Muslims. Also, on January 11, 1990, a massive protest was organized by the Northern branch of CAN on the exclusion of Christians from the country's central administration. In these protests, thousands of Christians in Kaduna, Jos, Yola and Bauchi marched in peaceful demonstration.⁸¹⁰ However, there were counter arguments which claimed that the administrations of Shagari, Buhari and Babangida were dominated by Christians⁸¹¹ and that before the restructuring of Babangida's cabinet, sixteen out of the nineteen ministers in his AFRC were Christians.⁸¹²

Until the coming into office of Obasanjo in 1999, the Aso (Rock) Villa, seat of the federal government of Nigeria, had three mosques without any provision for Christian worship. Both Babangida and Abacha had lived there under those circumstances. Christians in Nigeria took this to mean that the designers of the citadel did not anticipate a Christian President for Nigeria. Obasanjo's erection of the Aso Villa Chapel therefore remains a singular activity of lasting impression for Christians in Nigeria. However, perhaps eclipsing the Aso Villa Chapel is Obasanjo's effort in ensuring the completion of the National Christian Centre which for many years stood uncompleted. It was dedicated on October 2, 2005 with President Obasanjo in attendance.⁸¹³

Therefore, politics and religion have converged for mutual patronage in Nigeria. As far as Christianity is concerned, political naivety appears to be a thing of the past and by the same reason, one can predict that the future political space will continue to be charged with Christian active presence. However, in spite of invaluable benefits derived from the admixture of politics and religion, the interaction between the two remains a source of religious conflict in Nigeria.

⁸¹⁰ *The Touch*, No 94, 1990, 14.

⁸¹¹ David Williams, *President and Power in Nigeria: The Life of Shehu Shagari* (London: Frank Cass, 1982), 246.

⁸¹² *Newswatch*, Feb 1989.

⁸¹³ <http://www.anglican-nig.org/ecum%20centre.htm>

The Rise of Pentecostalism in Northern Nigeria

Nigerian Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches have made a great impact on Christianity. They have penetrated into every nook and cranny of the country, many African countries, Europe, America and every continent of the world although with varying degrees of successes. Asamoah-Gyadu has attempted to explain Pentecostalism as:

that stream of Christianity that emphasizes personal salvation in Christ as a transformative experience wrought by the Holy Spirit; and in which some pneumatic phenomena as speaking in tongues, prophecies, visions, healing, miracles and signs and wonders in general, are sought, accepted, valued, and consciously encouraged among members as evidence of the active presence of God's Spirit.⁸¹⁴

Quite central in the Pentecostal Churches is the place of the Holy Spirit and the demonstration of His power. This is similar in some ways with the experience of the AICs. Speaking on the Aladura Church, Omoyajowo said:

In the religious expression of the Aladura Churches, it is their emphasis on the manifestation of the Holy Spirit which distinguishes them from others. This is why they call themselves 'spiritual' Churches and why they have developed along lines quite different from older Churches...Ostensibly, whatever they do is inspired by the Holy Spirit.⁸¹⁵

Nigerian Pentecostalism emerged from the spontaneous prophetic or spiritual responses of Christian communities within non-Pentecostal (mission) Churches, through indigenous Nigerians. However, unlike Western Pentecostalism, the emphasis is not generally on holiness or some millennial Adventism. Rather the Nigerian Pentecostal Churches lay the emphasis on prayer, baptism by immersion, and above all, the presence of the Holy Spirit and its demonstration in signs and wonders, speaking in tongues, healing, miracles, dreams, visions, revelations, trances, and other visible manifestations of the power.⁸¹⁶

Apart from the early Nigerian initiatives, several Pentecostal missions have made their way into Nigeria while others have been founded through the mainline

⁸¹⁴ J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, "'Born of Water and Spirit': Pentecostal/Charismatic Christianity in Africa", in *African Christianity: An African Story* eds. O.U.Kalu, J.W Hofmeyr, P.J. Maritz (Pretoria: University of Pretoria, 2005), 389.

⁸¹⁵ J. Akinyele Omoyajowo, *Cherubim and Seraphim: The History of An African Independent Church* (New York: Nok Publishers International, 1982), 121

⁸¹⁶ Harold Turner, *Religious Innovation in Africa: Collected Essays on New Religious Movements* (Boston: GK Hall &Co., 1979), 122.

(mission) Churches.⁸¹⁷ However, most Nigerian charismatic movements appeared between 1970s and the 1980s. By the 1990s, they had grown and proliferated, under several influences, including the American tele-evangelistic ministries. Some of their preachers were evicted from the mainline churches. These young preachers were responsible for taking the Christian Gospel to Islamic sacred spaces with recorded success. According to Kalu:

The University students from the south who went for National Youth Service Corps in the north, established vigorous evangelical programs that differed from the muted, accomodationist, quarantined forms of Christian presence symbolized by the mission Churches located in enclaves known as 'strangers quarters'.⁸¹⁸

The vigorous activities of the young Pentecostal graduates are a significant aspect of the growth of Christian Pentecostalism in Northern Nigeria.

Under the umbrella of the PFN, the Pentecostal groups often jointly organized programmes which have been of significant effect in the nation. Because the PFN is one of the divisions of CAN, programmes organized are sometimes placed under CAN for wide coverage. In 1991, PFN/CAN organized one such open air 'crusade' in Kano in which the German charismatic preacher, Reinhard Bonnke was to preach. It metamorphosed into a major catastrophe. During the two days' riot which ensued, hundreds of Christians and southerners were killed. Shops were looted, vehicles and houses destroyed, Church buildings set on fire, and several other atrocities committed. Christians also made bold efforts to defend themselves by barricading roads and destroying mosques within the predominantly Christian area.⁸¹⁹ All these events show the effect of the rise of Pentecostalism in Nigeria.

While Kano has always been known for its resistance to Christianity and its history of religious fundamentalism, some critics of the Bonnke programme have blamed the riot on Pentecostal excesses. Mu'azzan and Ibrahim argued as follows:

Any careful observer of Kano's social and political reality will not fail to conclude that things were not likely to go well with Bonnke's proposed visit in October 1991. The level of aggressive ward-to-ward mobilisation carried out by the Christian groups...raised suspicion in the minds of an average Muslim on what their objective was. Complaints were made against the visit by people like Sheikh Nasiru Kabara,

⁸¹⁷ Crampton, 263.

⁸¹⁸ Kalu, "Sharia in Nigeria", 13-14.

⁸¹⁹ Gofwen, *Religious Violence*, 102-104.

the leader of the Qadiriyya section in Africa, to the effect that Bonnke's coming 'is a blatant provocation'.⁸²⁰

Therefore, the rise of Christian Pentecostalism has led to increased religious competition with a potential for religious conflict in Nigeria. Revival programmes which are aggressively publicised can easily lead to misrepresentation and misunderstanding in Northern Nigeria. While the contention here is not on the rightness or wrongness of 'crusades' or revivals organized by PFN, it is my argument that religious conflicts have thrived within that context.

Economic Recession in Nigeria

Many scholars have tried to look at the economic dimension of the various conflicts in Nigeria and my interviewees in Maiduguri hinged heavily on this issue. This matter cannot be separated from the problems of leadership in the country. For most people, the greatest failure of the Nigerian State is the economic hardship in which the 'oil' rich Nigerians have found themselves. There is no doubt that due to the 'oil boom', Nigeria quickly recovered from the devastation of the Civil War which marked the epilogue of the 1960s. However, the period of Babangida's rule/misrule in the 1980s and his Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) has gone down in Nigerian memoirs as the official entrenchment of economic decline, resulting in many conflicts.⁸²¹ Therefore there is a necessary link between the national economic decline and the manipulation of religious and ethnic identities which have resulted in conflicts. Still on the economic recession in Nigeria and its impact on conflicts, Gofwen has included the roles of Obasanjo's 'austerity measure'; Shagari's 'ethical revolution' and Babangida's IMF and World Bank-sponsored SAP. He concluded thus:

The most dramatic of the economic policies which marks a watershed in the history of this nation with its resultant consequence in all spheres of life in Nigeria, is the Structural Adjustment Programme which was introduced in 1986. Most significantly, the effect of this programme was that it resulted in the outright collapse of Nigeria as a welfare State.⁸²²

⁸²⁰ Mu'azzan and Ibrahim, *Citizen*, October 21-28, 1991, 17.

⁸²¹ Samuel G. Egwu, *Ethnic and Religious Violence in Nigeria* (Jos: St. Stephen Inc. Bookhouse, 2001), 2.

⁸²² Gofwen, *Religious Violence*, 147.

In like manner, Bako said of SAP:

SAP has ruined millions of individuals, families and even social classes. The bulk of the Nigerian middle class has been a proletarianised small owner in the rural and urban centres and poor peasants are reduced to mere destitute and beggars in the streets of Nigeria. About two thirds of the Nigerian labour force has been thrown out of jobs.⁸²³

In view of this failure of the State to create an enabling environment and to empower citizens for meaningful economic pursuits, various kinds of hardships were experienced by Nigerians. This led to many violent clashes in the forms of demonstrations, riots, strikes, coups and inter-group conflicts. Combined with the plan of democratic transition in the country, SAP led to a lot of political turbulence as people struggled to survive the tripartite obliteration of economic hardship, diminishing resources and an authoritarian regime.⁸²⁴ As a result of these economic hardships, many people took solace in the Churches and Mosques which had to support them for that which was government's responsibility to provide. Loyalty to religious bodies increased and people were available to run whatever errands came in the name of religion, including conflicts.

Global Religious Issues and International Politics

The role of global religious and political issues in the promotion of religious conflicts in Nigeria is crucial. In this regard, we are restricted to activities in which the West/Israel and the Middle East are involved. Examples are legion concerning the various reactions and counter-reactions in Nigeria to such global matters. Only a few are here considered.

First, when Nigeria joined thirty-two other African nations to sever relations with Israel between 1972 and 1973, it was a matter of national concern. Based on Israel's occupation of the Sinai Peninsula after the 1967 Six-Day War, in which a coalition of Egypt, Jordan and Syria was roundly defeated, African nations pulled out of diplomatic relations with Israel on the grounds of respect for the territorial integrity of African nations. Some analysts have however adduced more explanations to the

⁸²³ S. Bako, "World Recession and Growth of Religious Intolerance in Nigeria" in *Religion and Peace in Multifaith Nigeria* ed. Jacob Olupona (Ile Ife: Obafemi Awolowo University, 1992), 166.

⁸²⁴ Eghosa E. Osagie, *Crippled Giant: Nigeria Since Independence* (London: Hurst & Company, 1998), 243.

severance of relations. These included an Arab diplomatic offensive and economic persuasion, to which African leaders flatly succumbed.⁸²⁵ In 1980, a Peace Treaty was signed between Israel and Egypt but it was extremely difficult for African nations to re-establish their relations with Israel. In Nigeria there were a lot of pressures brought to bear on the government urging the restoration of relations. In 1982, 106 legislators from the national Assembly drafted a motion asking for restoration. However, Shagari's government, owing to pressures from Islamic nations and organizations both within and outside the country, disallowed the return.⁸²⁶ It followed that several prominent Christians in government, the private sector, Churches and Christian organizations, intensified their appeals and pressures for the restoration of relations with Israel.⁸²⁷ In most Christian prayers and sermons, the restoration of the relationship with Israel was of vital importance. While these agitations were going on, a strange thing happened: namely, the visit of the Ooni of Ife and the Emir of Kano to Israel in 1984. Although this action earned the royal fathers some reprimand, it also countered the notion which excluded non-Christians from the desire and process of reunion with Israel. Lastly and most importantly, in August 1991, President Babangida, the one who had clandestinely dragged Nigeria into the OIC in 1986, restored diplomatic relations between Nigeria and Israel.⁸²⁸ Most Christians in Nigeria welcomed this reunion with great delight.

Second, when in the late 1980s Ayatollah Khomeini branded Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* as blasphemous, the NSCIA and the Iranian government prevailed on the Nigerian government to ban the importation and sale of the book. Nigerian Christians not only saw it as a support of Khomeini's 'fundamentalist philistinism', but as state apologetic in promotion of Islam.⁸²⁹ Many Christians in the country felt it was not the business of the Nigerian government to dabble in such matters.

⁸²⁵ Joel Peters, *Israel and Africa*, <http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=jtgrLRrvMUAC&pg=PA97&ots=GmDI&sig=fR-tcNigeria+Diploma+relations+with+Israel>, 43.

⁸²⁶ David Kimche, "Israel and Africa", <http://www.african-geopolitics.org/show.aspx?ArticleId=3097>

⁸²⁷ Peters, *Israel and Africa*, 97-98.

⁸²⁸ Metz, "Nigeria: Introduction" (Web page).

⁸²⁹ Falola, *Violence in Nigeria*, 165.

Third, the “Osama riots” in Kano at the break of the ‘War on Terrorism, which followed the September 11, 2001, bombing of the World Trade Centre, is another example of external links to religious conflicts in Nigeria. The US led air strike against Afghanistan led to a blood bath inflicted on innocent non-Muslims on October 13, 2001. Over a dozen people were killed and houses, vehicles and shops belonging to Christians were looted and destroyed.⁸³⁰ A few weeks after this, the Emir of Kano condemned Osama bin Laden’s idea of jihad against the United States.⁸³¹ Also, when the Kano-based Shiite Islamic group led by Zakzaky organized a rally in support of Hezbollah on May 8, 2006, Christians wondered what their concern was. A similar march had taken place in Bauchi, Katsina, and some other Northern cities in protest against the same Israeli bombing of Lebanon. Protesters went round the streets chanting slogans of denunciation of Israel, America, Britain and all their collaborators.⁸³² This global dimension of the Nigerian religious crisis is of great importance to the understanding of religious conflict in Nigeria.

Conclusion

From foregoing, it can be argued that there are several background contexts to religious conflicts in Northern Nigeria. They include the manipulation of the nation’s religious plurality; ethnicity, colonialism, religious politics, *sharia*, OIC, Pentecostalism, economic recession and international religious and political issues. These factors are not exhaustive and sometimes they are inseparable. However, by considering them separately, both the potency of each factor and the dynamic ways in which the factors intermix for conflict generation could be seen. Having considered these ‘epicentres’ of conflict, our next major task is to provide theological reflections which correlate with lived experience of religious conflict in Nigeria.

⁸³⁰ <http://www.ilamonline.net/English/News/2001-10/14/article8.shtml> Also, according to the US embassy in September, 2007, Nigeria was at risk of terrorist attack because Osama bin Laden had named the country as ripe for jihad. http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20071112/ts_nm/nigeria_arrests_dc,12/11/2007.

⁸³¹ BBC, “Nigeria’s Emir Opposes bin Laden,” November 23, 2001.

⁸³² “In Support of Lebanese and Palestinians”, <http://community.allhiphop.com/showthread.php?t=287677&page=2>, 18/08/2006, 6.

CHAPTER SIX

TOWARDS A THEOLOGY OF CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

Introduction

Religion is not just a source of conflict, but a resource for peace and social cohesion. It has an impact in the causes, dynamic and handling of conflict.⁸³³ Ter Haar captured this ambivalence of religion in her observation of Western societies. She contended that these societies affirm that religion is concurrently a 'negative force' and a 'basically good' phenomenon and suggested that "religion is neither inherently peaceful, nor does it automatically or inevitably lead to conflict."⁸³⁴ Researchers are therefore becoming more aware that religion is an inevitable factor in both conflict generation and transformation. McTernan puts it succinctly: "It became clear to me that religion can be as much a part of problem as a part of the solution in resolving conflict."⁸³⁵ And despite all charges brought against religion as being responsible for violence, it was not religion that made the twentieth century the bloodiest one. Rather, on an unprecedented scale, millions of people were maimed and murdered by the likes of Lenin, Stalin, Hitler, Mao Tse-tung, Pol Pot and their Rwanda 'trainees' in the name of policies and ideologies which completely abhorred religious and transcendental influences.⁸³⁶

Further, experts have also opined that while there has been a wide range of discussions on the role of religion in the evolution of conflict, in recent years, attention has shifted with a rising interest to how religion can be used in both conflict

⁸³³ Mohammed Abu-Nimer, "Conflict Resolution, Culture, and Religion: Toward a Training Model of Interreligious Peacebuilding" *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 38, No. 6. (Nov., 2001), 685.

⁸³⁴ Gerrie ter Haar, "Religion: Source of Conflict or Resource for Peace" in *Comparative Perspectives on Shari'ah in Nigeria* eds. Philip Ostien, Jamila M. Nasir and Franz Kogelmann (Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited, 2005), 305.

⁸³⁵ Oliver McTernan, *Violence in God's Name: Religion in an Age of Conflict* (London: Longman & Todd Ltd., 2003), xv.

⁸³⁶ George Weigel, "Religion and Peace: An argument Complexified," *The Washington Quarterly*, Spring/1991, 39.

resolution and the process of peace-building.⁸³⁷ Put differently, some people speak of 'faith-based' or 'spiritual' or 'inter-religious' approaches to conflict transformation.

But the contributions of faiths to public debates have spanned beyond the issues of conflict alone. For instance, The World Economic Forum, the World Social Forum, Transparency International, the World Bank, and the UN, have all been increasingly willing to hear the 'voice' of the faiths by inviting religious leaders to participate in their programmes.⁸³⁸ In June (25-27) 2001, there was a special General Assembly of the UN on HIV/AIDS in which Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) were actively involved. At the Assembly it was reported that the involvement of religious leaders in AIDS strategies in countries like Uganda, Senegal and Thailand, contributed a great deal to the success of AIDS awareness and management in those countries.⁸³⁹ It follows that religious approaches are now being appreciated and explored in responding to various problems in our world by people in position to take decisive global actions. Therefore, on the basis of the foregoing chapters which discussed religious conflicts in Jos and Maiduguri, this chapter attempts to examine spiritual resources which could assist in transforming the religious conflicts of Northern Nigeria. There are three assumptions of this endeavour needful of mention here.

First, it is assumed here that there is not in existence, a universally agreed framework of knowledge for peace and transformation of conflicts. That therefore means new frameworks must be continuously developed.⁸⁴⁰ This is especially crucial for Nigeria where, although several peace-related studies have been undertaken, it was only in the year 2001 that Peace and Conflict Studies began as a unit degree course in the

⁸³⁷ Abu-Nimer, "Conflict Resolution", 685.

⁸³⁸ Marcus Braybrooke, "Spiritual Elements in the Pursuit of Peace," *Dialogue & Alliance*, Vol. 18 (1), 2004, 53.

⁸³⁹ <http://www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/mission/ny-statement.html>

⁸⁴⁰ Abdul Aziz Said, and Funk, Nathan C, "The Role of Faith in Cross-Cultural Conflict Resolution, A Paper Presented at the European Parliament for the European Centre for Common Ground", September 2001,

<http://www.gmu.edu/academic/pcs/ASNC83PCS.htm> p.1.

University of Ibadan, Nigeria's premier university.⁸⁴¹ As such, the soil for new approaches towards conflict transformation work is fertile and open to cultivation.

Second, approaches based on religious precepts must not be considered invalid or jettisoned by promoters of secular approaches. While there are benefits in secular approaches, they do not displace spiritual approaches.⁸⁴² Religion is powerful and is the constituent of values, norms and the ethical issues of life.⁸⁴³ In short, the criteria for moral and ethical judgement rest within the province of religion. Therefore, transforming conflicts in the contemporary world must include the uncovering of the concepts held in highest esteem (such as peace, justice, forgiveness, reconciliation and love) by the diverse religions of those who populate conflict zones. This will help them in discovering common grounds for tangible operations and peaceful co-existence.⁸⁴⁴ For Nigeria, this has to happen among the adherents of the three extant religions and more between Christians and Muslims. Islam and Christianity in Nigeria proffer a huge amount of synergy as demonstrated in this news article:

Each [Islam and Christianity] has normative aspects governing behaviour on earth and transcendental ones, on life after death. In these aspects, the two religions are in fact remarkably similar in that they have same ideas about what is right and what is wrong.⁸⁴⁵

Third, this chapter assumes that a contextual conflict transformation approach must be both acceptable and respected like among medical scientists who have taken seriously, the successful healing practices in Africa prior to Western medical influence.⁸⁴⁶ The implication of this is that the pre-colonial strategies which Africans have used in handling their numerous conflicts in the past could become useful tools

⁸⁴¹ Isaac Olawale Albert, Concepts and Methods in Peace and Conflict Studies", in *Conflict Resolution, Identity Crisis and Development in Africa* eds. Celestine Bassey & Oshita Oshita (Lagos: Malthouse Press Limited, 2007), 6.

⁸⁴² See "Peacemakers in Action" in *Peacemakers in Action: Profiles of Religion in Conflict Resolution* ed. David Little (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 9.

⁸⁴³ Said and Funk, 2.

⁸⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁴⁵ *Sunday New Nigeria*, 23/10/88. See Maluleke's proposal for African Christian Theology. For him, the growing consciousness of the plural situation of Africa calls for an inter-religious approach to Christian theology. Tiyyinko Sam Maluleke, "Half a Century of African Christian Theologies: Elements of the Emerging Agenda for the Twenty first Century" in *African Christianity: An African Story* ed. Ogbu Kalu (Pretoria: Business Print Centre, 2005), 481.

⁸⁴⁶ I. William Zartman, "Introduction: African Traditional Conflict 'Medicine'", in *Traditional Cures for Modern Conflicts* ed. I. William Zartman (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc, 2000), 1.

for the management of contemporary conflict. After all, “Africans live in the modern technological world with their traditional cosmologies.”⁸⁴⁷

Perhaps more than anything else, the limitations of European models as employed by the UN and other Western powers in the management of past conflicts in Africa has diminished interest in employing Western models.⁸⁴⁸ Lederach relates a similar experience in the attempt to manage conflicts in Latin America. He discovered that the application of Western techniques to the indigenous contexts was greatly circumscribed. Therefore, he concluded that mediators who were ‘insiders’ and who derived their approaches from indigenous cultural resources, were more relevant and suitable for Latin America than their North American counterparts.⁸⁴⁹

Lastly, even the UN and the AU Charters have made provision for conflict management to be contextualized. The UN Charter recognizes regional organizations and invites countries to utilize “regional arrangements” and exhaust “other means” of settling disputes before resorting to the UN machinery.⁸⁵⁰ The AU Charter also calls on African countries to manage their conflicts through “culturally or regionally different ways”.⁸⁵¹ That means the resources for conflict transformation should spring more from the contexts of conflict than from a purely external arena. In this regard, the traditional approaches to conflict transformation as manifested in Nigeria, must be incorporated into the values of Muslim and Christian spirituality as essential components of conflict transformation.

According to Desmond Tutu, “We cannot hope to make this world more secure by employing tactics which are based on the dehumanization of others...These are short

⁸⁴⁷ Jack Thompson, “Exploring Religious Spaces in the African State: Development and Politics from Below”, conference organized by the Centre of African Studies, the University of Edinburgh, New College, 10/4/08. See also Wande Abimbola, “A West African Cosmological System.” In *Religion in Africa: Experience and Expression* eds. Thomas D. Blakely, Walter E.A van Beek and Thomas L. Denis. London, Heinemann, 1994, 100.

⁸⁴⁸ Zartman, 201.

⁸⁴⁹ Paul Wehr and John Paul Lederach, “Mediating Conflict in Central America”, *Journal of Peace Research*, 38, August, 1993, 331-346.

⁸⁵⁰ Adda Bruemmer Bozeman, *Conflict in Africa* (Princeton Guildford: Princeton University Press, 1976), 16.

⁸⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 18.

sighted strategies that can only lead to further conflict...”⁸⁵² That means reinforcing boundaries between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria must be avoided and space must be created for the celebration of their diversity. A relevant theology as basis for this approach is a matter of urgency. However, before going into that, it is important to briefly mention the theological grounds already covered concerning the relationship between Christianity and other religions. This is a *sine qua non* to any emerging theological contribution which engages inter-religious relationships.

Theology and Religious Pluralism

Religious pluralism, in our estimation, is one of the most urgent issues for contemporary theology in Nigeria, where incessant religious conflicts have gained centre stage. Since Nigerian Christians are not cut off from the rest of the world, it is important to begin by taking note of the fact that Christians have contemplated on relationships with people of other religions right from the New Testament times.⁸⁵³ Also, throughout the patristic period and up to the modern period, discussions on the relationship between Christianity and other religions have burgeoned with complexities. Both biblical witness and Christian tradition have therefore been replete with mixed positions on the issue of people of other faiths and this has had much influence on how Christians relate with such people. While some Church fathers maintained a completely abhorrent attitude towards other religions, others subscribed to the possibility of their prospects for salvation and this sometimes leads to the issues of relationships. Two broad theological categories came to be developed concerning the relationship of Christianity with other faiths namely, the ‘exclusivist’ and the ‘inclusivist’ views.⁸⁵⁴ However, in the second half of the twentieth century, another category became popular, namely, the ‘pluralist’ model.⁸⁵⁵ In his attempt to describe these theological strands, Douglas Webster depicted the first attitude (exclusivism) as “rigidly conservative”; the second (inclusivism) as “ultra-liberal”

⁸⁵² Desmond M Tutu, “Reflections on Moral Accountability”, *The International Journal of Transitional Justice*, Vol. 1 No 1, 2007, 7.

⁸⁵³ Richard Schebera, “Comparative Theology”, 8: A New Method of Interreligious Dialogue”, *Dialogue Alliance*, Vol. 17 (1) 2003, 8.

⁸⁵⁴ Ibid.

and the third (pluralism) as “moderate or middle of the way”.⁸⁵⁶ The Church in Nigeria must understand these three theological perspectives with which the larger Christian communities have wrestled in negotiating relationships with adherents of other religions. The experiences of some of the key protagonists show that they have had to move from one approach to another, as in the cases of Knitter and Kung.⁸⁵⁷ These categories are generally identified as the elements of ‘theology of religions.’

From Theology of Religions to Comparative Theology

The question to ask then is: what kind of theology will be suitable for the Church to handle the issues of religious pluralism in Nigeria? What kind of theology will influence the reconciliation of our divided societies and encourage peaceful coexistence in Nigeria? How can dialogue, being a tool for engaging religious pluralism, also serve as an instrument of peace-building in Nigeria? Specifically, what kind of inter-religious relationships and strategies can assist the Church in practical ways to be involved in the transformation of religious conflict in Northern Nigeria?

As mentioned in chapter three, I have adopted in this thesis the methodology of practical theology which utilizes elements of ‘comparative theology.’ Comparative theology accepts the reality of plurality and seeks to “compare particular points between religions”.⁸⁵⁸ It allows for commitment to one’s faith and openness to the faith of others. Comparative theology allows the Church to be able to practically function within the context of religious pluralism.⁸⁵⁹ I have spoken extensively on this in chapter three.

⁸⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁵⁶ Douglas Webster, “Christian Faith and World Religions”, part of A Lecture given in the Canterbury Cathedral, London, The British Council of Churches, n.d; 1-2. See John Hick, *Problems of Religious Pluralism* (London: Macmillan Press, 1985) and *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness* eds. Hick and Knitter (New York: Orbis, 1989). See also Jean S.J. Danielou, *Holy Pagans of the Old Testament* (London: Longman Green and Co., 1957). There are also enormous explanations in Bengt Sundkler, “Christ and the Religions”, *Lutheran World*, Vol. 21 (4), 1974, pp. 358-365.

⁸⁵⁷ Paul F. Knitter, *Jesus and Other Names: Christian Missions and Global Responsibilities* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1996), 9.

⁸⁵⁸ Schabera, 10.

⁸⁵⁹ Schabera, 10. I note here that ‘comparative theology’ has meant different things at different periods of Church history. As far back as the eighteenth century, comparative theology was understood as a

Archbishop Idowu-Fearon of Kaduna (Nigeria) carried out an experiment in the area of practical ministry through a programme of comparative theology in a situation of the breakdown of the relationship between Christians and Muslims in Wusasa, Zaria, Nigeria. With the goal of effecting reconciliation in the community, he brought together 24 participants from the community, 12 Muslims and 12 Christians, for a joint study of the Bible and the Koran for a period of three months.⁸⁶⁰ Topics discussed included love, patience, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and justice. In the sessions, each religious tradition met separately before meeting jointly. Fearon reports that the people got to know one another better and what each group believed. Some of the participants' comments at the end of the programme include:

“As a Muslim participant, I now have an understanding of what the Christians believe and I should now be able to relate better to them.” Another person said: “I have been asking God to do something about the strained relationship between us and the Muslims in this village for years. Now it has happened. We are together again, eating and drinking together as one people.” And for the future, someone in the group suggested: “Christians and Muslims are encouraged to meet regularly and share their books and traditions together.” Again, another participant wrote: “We need to make arrangement to see that our children are no longer taught to hate the other religion or to use provocative words against them.”⁸⁶¹ Based on this experiment, I consider the approach of comparative theology as a useful tool for conflict transformation in Nigeria.

Towards A Theology of Hospitality

As already mentioned, the goal of this research is to carry out theological reflections on the basis of empirical research, which will assist in the transformation of religious

comparison of different aspects of the Christian faith (intra-religious). See James Garden, *Comparative Theology or the True and Solid Grounds of Pure and Peaceable Theology: A Subject Very Necessary Tho' Hitherto Almost Wholly Neglected, first Laid Down in a University Discourse, An Now Translated from the Original Latin*, Bristol, 1756, 40-41. Also, in Germany, since the 1970s, it has been understood as comparison between various expressions of Christian theology (Wisjen, 42.).

⁸⁶⁰ Josiah Atkins Idowu-Fearon, *Reconciling a Religiously-Divided Community Through Inter-Faith Dialogue: An Experiment in Wusasa-Zaria of Nigeria*, A Ministry Project Submitted to the Faculty of Hatford Seminary in Partial Fulfilment of requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Ministry, June, 1992, 48-66.

⁸⁶¹ Ibid., 64-65.

conflict in Nigeria. Because religion elaborates on the moral and ethical principles of a given society and defines the terms and conditions for individual and social harmony, we need new frameworks which will recognize its role in transforming conflict in Nigeria.

This thesis offers a ‘theology of hospitality’ as a possible framework to respond to the challenges posited by religious conflicts in the nation. While discourses on religious hospitality are not new, I present the paradigm in this thesis as a possible approach to conflict transformation in Nigeria. Churches have been criticized for inaction in the face of violent clashes around the world. Commenting on the role of the Church of Latin America, Manuel Garreton said:

Typically we hear the church say, ‘we condemn violence per se – all types of violence, regardless from whence it comes’. This tends to be abstract and unproductive. No one is advocating violence as such...what is needed today is a strategy for necessary change [transformation]...a way must be found to move beyond it.⁸⁶²

The Latin American situation is similar to Nigeria’s experience. The Church in Nigeria today must also be summoned to respond in active strategic ways towards the transformation of the incessant religious conflicts which have caused so much pain. The model reflected upon here, namely, the theology of hospitality, is not just for the purpose of handling conflicts, but as a manner of relationship that is required between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria before, during and after conflicts or disputations. It is a model which calls on Christians (and possibly Muslims) not to stand outside their environment, but to “participate in their wider culture and the enterprises of their neighbours”⁸⁶³. However, it is germane to briefly state what hospitality means.

What is Hospitality?

The word hospitality has its roots in the Latin noun *hospitium* or adjective *hospitalis* which also derive from *hospes*, which means ‘guest’ or ‘host.’⁸⁶⁴ The English words

⁸⁶² Manuel Antonio Garreton, “Theology of the Church of Latin America” in *Theology, Politics and Peace* ed. Theodore Runyan (New York: Orbis Books, 1989), 26.

⁸⁶³ Luke Bretherton, *Hospitality as Holiness: A Christian Witness Amid Moral Diversity* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006).

⁸⁶⁴ John Koenig, “Hospitality”, *Encyclopedia of Religion*, Second Ed; Vol 6, 2005, 4138.

‘hospital’, ‘host’, ‘hostel’ and ‘hospitality’ come from these roots.⁸⁶⁵ The *Dictionary of Etymology* defines hospitality as “the friendly treatment of guests or strangers”.⁸⁶⁶ Another dictionary defines hospitality as “cordial reception: kindness in welcoming guests or strangers”.⁸⁶⁷ Koenig says hospitality is “an eminent practical virtue through gift exchanges and the sharing of food or shelter [and this ensures that] peace and harmony are achieved in what would otherwise be a chaotic world.”⁸⁶⁸ Jane Page quotes Bill Verstreet’s definition of hospitality as: “The divine enablement to share with others our home, our lives, our personal space and resources without communicating a need for performance or an expectation of return.”⁸⁶⁹

From the foregoing, I assume that hospitality is one’s friendly reception and generous treatment of guests, strangers, and people who are different from one. This term is very useful for transforming religious conflict in Nigeria. Responses from interviewees from the sites of conflicts in Nigeria show vividly that Christians and Muslims must adequately welcome one another. Instead of hospitality in some places, hostility prevails. Plateau State, known as ‘Home of Peace and Tourism’, and Borno State, where the conflicts being studied took place, are in desperate need of a renewal of the tradition of hospitality; a strikingly new way of treating the perceived ‘other’.

Basis in Christian Theology of an Ethic of Hospitality

In his book, *Free of Charge: Giving and Forgiving in a Culture Stripped of Grace*, Miroslav Volf describes God as ‘Giver’ and ‘Forgiver’ and invites Christians to take seriously the practice of these two acts of God’s grace. The grace of giving and the grace of forgiving are expressions of God’s unconditional love. He describes God’s love as not being elicited for the purpose of manipulating the object of love. Recalling Luther’s understanding of God’s love, Volf asserts that God’s love is not

⁸⁶⁵ Cynthia Clampitt, “Hospitality”, <http://intelligentchristian.or/hospital.htm> . See also “Hospital” in *Dictionary of Ethics and Society*, 1976, 445.

⁸⁶⁶ *Dictionary of Etymology*, ed. Robert K. Barnhart, 1988, 492.

⁸⁶⁷ wordnet.princeton.edu/perl/webwn

⁸⁶⁸ Koenig, 4139.

⁸⁶⁹ Jane Page, “The Theology of Hospitality,” <http://uustatesboro.uuism.net/Hospitality.htm>, October 14, 2007.

based on seeking His own good. Rather, God loves sinners and evil persons for their own good, in order to make them righteous and good. The climax of this divine love was manifested on the cross on which Jesus took upon Himself the sin of the whole world. He did this not for His own enjoyment, but that He may confer good upon guilty sinners. This divine love was expressed by God in Christ not for the sake of receiving, but for the sake of giving.⁸⁷⁰ On the basis of this divine love, Christians, who are indwelt by Christ, are to be imitators of God by becoming givers, frail and sinful as they may be. The reason God has given so much to Christians is so that they may share what they have received from God with others. Christians therefore “are not just the intended recipients of God’s gifts, [they] are also their channels.”⁸⁷¹ As such, Christians are not the final destination of God’s gifts. Instead, the gifts of God flow into them and flow from them to others who are in need. The gifts of God are therefore meant to flow to Christians and from them.⁸⁷² Christians are supposed to be free from living exclusively for themselves. They are to be opened up both in vertical and horizontal directions, “toward God, to receive the good things in faith, and toward [their] neighbours to pass them on in love.”⁸⁷³ The purpose of the Christian therefore is to flourish and to make others flourish in the sense that Abraham was to be blessed so that he may be a blessing to others (Gen. 12:1-3). For Christians therefore, the things they are given by God are not just theirs, whether material goods, food or shelter. Though the gifts may be in their hands and even be enjoyed by them, these gifts are on their way elsewhere, to people in need, and this flow of God’s gifts must not be blocked.⁸⁷⁴ The gifts are given in order to help others. That is God’s kind of giving and that should be the motive for Christian giving.

Furthermore, the Christian ethic of giving is surely beyond what many Christians do at Christmas, giving only to those they know and who will give them things in return.

⁸⁷⁰ Miroslav Volf, *Free of Charge: Giving and Forgiving in a Culture Stripped of Grace* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 38-39.

⁸⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 59.

⁸⁷² *Ibid.*, 50.

⁸⁷³ *Ibid.*, 52.

⁸⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 60.

Rather, Christian giving should also be to those who are outside these borders. Christian generosity should be towards both stranger and kin, known and unknown and to deserving and undeserving people. It matters not where the needy come from, their needs should be met by Christians who have received of God's generous act in Christ.⁸⁷⁵ In the Christian view, giving is made possible only by God who began the act of giving to mankind. If God did not initiate giving, men would never have been able to give. "Without God, gift giving would be what a philosopher would call ontologically impossible."⁸⁷⁶ God also ensures that gifts are not just between givers and receivers alone. "God is the third party between givers and recipients [and] givers cannot lose. They always receive what they give and more...Those who pass gifts on receive more abundantly from the source of gifts."⁸⁷⁷

In addition to being a giver and expecting Christians to follow in His steps, Volf also presents God as the Forgiver. Forgiveness helps to build relationship between people where there has been wrongdoing. Forgiveness makes the wrongdoing to be mentioned and condemned. It is a special kind of gift. And just like one who gives seeks the good of the recipient, when a person practices forgiveness, he is primarily seeking the good of another.⁸⁷⁸

The Christian view of forgiveness, like that of the giver, is also like a triangle. It is not between the two parties of disharmony alone. God is involved and He is actually the one who forgives. Man forgives only because God forgives and he should do so as God does it; echoing God's forgiveness. God does not 'reckon sin,' (Romans 4:8; Psalm 32: 1-2); He covers sin (Psalm 32:1); puts away men's wrongdoing behind His [God's] back (Isaiah 38:17); removes our transgression from us for as far as the East is to the West (Psalm 103:12); "blots out"our sin (Isaiah 44:22) and miraculously does not even remember our sins anymore (Isaiah 43:25; Jeremiah 31:34; Hebrews 8:12; 10:17).⁸⁷⁹ Because God has so forgiven the Christian through Christ, the

⁸⁷⁵ Ibid., 75.

⁸⁷⁶ Ibid., 101.

⁸⁷⁷ Ibid., 104.

⁸⁷⁸ Ibid., 130

⁸⁷⁹ Ibid., 142-3.

Christian is placed under obligation to forgive others. Because Christ lives in the Christian, the Christian is endowed with the power to forgive through Him.⁸⁸⁰

In order for a theology of hospitality to be developed, these graces of giving and forgiving, as mentioned above, are basic, indispensable practices. In fact they are even basic necessities for the practice of the Christian faith and for living the Christian life. Each of the two graces is rooted in God and passed on to the Christian by God. Both acts of giving and forgiving are given by God to the Christian to enjoy and to pass on to others in need of them. Both graces can be practiced only by the power of the indwelling Christ. Hospitality is not possible when the spirit of generous giving is absent. And in places like Jos and Maiduguri where there have been incessant violent clashes, hospitality can only be possible if the practices of giving generously and forgiving one another are actively engaged. Where these two graces are lacking, there cannot be hospitality, neither can there be any true practice of the Christian faith. If Christians in Nigeria would truly reflect on the enormity of God's generosity and forgiveness bestowed on them, hospitality as spirituality and strategy for transforming religious conflict in Nigeria would be simplified and realizeable.

Grounds for a Theology of Hospitality in Nigeria

A theological framework which will contribute to the transformation of Christian-Muslim conflict in Nigeria must be founded upon some peculiar contextual factors. Specifically, my reflections on a theology of hospitality in Nigeria are grounded on empirical information from the fields of conflicts (the situation) and the efforts of ecumenical bodies. While I begin in this section with what I consider as the 'spiritual' dimension of the theology of hospitality, I shall reflect on how this theology of hospitality could be used as a strategy for conflict transformation in our next chapter.

⁸⁸⁰ Ibid., 221.

Empirical Information

As shown in chapter four, findings from the fields of conflict call for a renegotiation of the relationship between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria. And by a theology of hospitality, I am saying that Christians and Muslims are both invited and provided with resources to deal with the question of their relationship with each other in a new way.

Findings show that hostility has increased between Christians and Muslims in Jos and Maiduguri based on the conflicts which occurred. The communities are marked with both social and geographical polarization as certain places have become “no go” areas for people of the ‘other’ religion within the cities. If the situation is not comprehensively attended to, there is every possibility that more intensive conflicts between Christians and Muslims can be anticipated in the future. Hatred, suspicion, fears and bitterness of heart were expressed by interviewees and it was believed that many people were carrying dangerous weapons as a result of the conflicts. The condition has been worsened by poor economic circumstances, the political climate and the ethnic diversity in the country. And yet the empirical information shows that in the midst of these hostilities, the spirit of hospitality prevailed with assuring hopes in certain cases. I have emphasized the role of hospitality demonstrated by Archbishop Kaigama of Jos and Sheikh Abba Aji of Maiduguri as classic examples of the triumph of hospitality over hostility. Without religious discrimination, both religious leaders in Jos and Maiduguri went beyond mere tolerance of the religious ‘other,’ into practically welcoming them at a most desperate period of religious conflict. The two religious leaders demonstrated the teachings of love for God and for the neighbour as expressed by my respondents to be core teachings in both Christianity and Islam. That means both Christians and Muslims have the capacity for providing hospitality to each other and they have Scriptures to back such actions. Also, as already mentioned, the experiences of the people of Dadin-Kowa and Nyan Shanu areas of Jos were expressions of the demonstration of hospitality. In both communities, Christians and Muslims received each other into their homes and would not allow any harm against the adherents of the ‘other’ religion. In the course of my interviews, eight out of the ten one-on-one interviewees in Jos strongly spoke on the positive effect of hospitality as a way out of the problem of religious conflict.

In Maiduguri, both Sheikh Abba Aji and Sheikh Abdullahi Mohammed spoke on the potency of hospitality in the face of disharmony while a few others alluded to it in their emphasis on feeding the hungry and relating even with strangers. I therefore argue that if hospitality, as both a spiritual and a social device, has led to the preservation of relationships during crisis, its cohesive dynamics could be employed for the transformation of religious conflicts in contemporary Nigerian society.

Ecumenical Contributions

Apart from the findings from the field on the trends and aftermath of the conflicts, some ecumenical views have informed a call for a theology of hospitality in Nigeria. In this regard it is important to mention the contributions of Vatican II, WCC, and AACC in their call to dialogue.

Vatican II (1962-1965)

Vatican II was greatly instrumental in the shift of horizons in the relationship between Christianity and other religions. It marked the first major modification in the Church's self awareness.⁸⁸¹ In its *Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions*, the Council stated *inter alia*:

Since it is her [the Church's] task to foster unity and love among men, and indeed among nations, she first considers in this declaration what men have in common and what draws them into fellowship together...

She therefore urges her sons, using prudence and charity, to join members of other religions in **discussing** and **collaboration** [emphasis mine]. While bearing witness to their own faith and life, they must acknowledge those good spiritual and moral elements and social and cultural values found in other religions, and preserve and encourage them.⁸⁸²

The above position was to map out a new path for the Church's relationship with other faiths. Barnes sees two shifts here in the Church's self understanding. The first is the removal of the marginalization of people of other faiths and the acceptance that they have a role to play in the life and mission of a world-orientated Church.

⁸⁸¹ Hans Kung *et al*, *Christianity and World Religions*, xi.

⁸⁸² *The Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions* (London: The Incorporated Catholic Truth Society, 1966), 3-4.

The second is a shift in the call for dialogue between Christianity and other faiths.⁸⁸³

Similarly, Dhavamony says of the Council:

The whole spirit of the Council was openness towards other religions...It recognized what is true, good, and holy in other religions and called for fruitful **dialogue** and **collaboration** [emphasis mine] to build a world community of peace and liberty and justice.⁸⁸⁴

Barnes writes that Rahner saw Vatican II as the Church's recognition of "other cultures and religions and the need to develop practices and theology which will adequately express its new responsibility."⁸⁸⁵ Kung, on the other hand, continued to build on the new paradigm. He emphasized the need for religions to build on their commonalities rather than their division. About a decade after Vatican II, Kung said:

For it has become clearer to me that the world religions have and must accept a concrete responsibility for world peace. This presupposes that the religions focus less on what divides them than on what they have in common. And in fact, if we analyze the ethical programs, standards, and demands of world religions, we discover that they have more in common than what divides them.⁸⁸⁶

From the foregoing, we assert that Vatican II and its legacies have provided a basis for developing a theology of hospitality because they call Christians to engage in a more cordial relationship with people of other religions, which is also a summons to hospitality. The Council has moved the Church from a dialectic opposition of other faiths to a dialogical conversation. According to Dupuis, "Perhaps the importance of the new attitudes brought about by the council has not yet been fully appreciated nor have its theological implications been adequately worked out"⁸⁸⁷. I think that a theology of hospitality supports the intentions of the Council in engaging the relationship difficulties between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria.

⁸⁸³ Michael Barnes SJ, *Theology and the Dialogue of Religions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 30-31.

⁸⁸⁴ Mariasusai Dhavamony, *Christian Theology of Religions: A Systematic Reflection on Christian Understanding of World Religions* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2001), 8.

⁸⁸⁵ Barnes, 30.

⁸⁸⁶ Hans Kung *et al*, *Christianity and World Religions* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1986), xiii.

⁸⁸⁷ Jacques Dupuis, S.J., *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2001), 12.

The call of Vatican II therefore is for the Church to dialogue and ‘work together’ with people of other faiths.⁸⁸⁸ If dialogue here will be understood as conceived by Lamin Sanneh as “the conversation that goes on between people in a context of deep and open commitment...a sign that our relationship with others has ripened to mutual consultation,”⁸⁸⁹ then I argue here that the theological framework on which to base such a relationship must continue to be renewed, more so when religious conflict is involved.

World Council of Churches (WCC)

WCC is another ecumenical body which has given basis for the development of theological frameworks towards inter-religious relationships. Specifically, the WCC has been concerned about the issue of dialogue as an instrument of inter-religious encounter. In a study by WCC⁸⁹⁰, it was noted that attempts had been made by various earlier missionary/ecumenical bodies to understand the import of the Gospel in a pluralistic world. The efforts were made by the World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh (1910); Jerusalem (1928) and Tambaram (1938) Missionary Conferences. When in 1961 the International Missionary Council united with the WCC, the concern was raised again through the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism. This led to the creation in 1971 of a Sub-Unit which was responsible for promoting dialogue. In 1977, the Sub-Unit drew up the *Guidelines on Dialogue* in Chiang Mai, Thailand.⁸⁹¹ Also, the Sub-Unit organized a series of multilateral and bilateral dialogues between Christians and Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, and Jews.⁸⁹²

⁸⁸⁸ Richard Friedli, “Dialogue between the Religions – Its Cultural Anthropological Problems” in *Faith in the Midst of Faiths: Reflections on Dialogue in Community* ed. S.J. Samartha (Geneva: WCC, 1977), 29.

⁸⁸⁹ L.O. Sanneh, “Dialogue and Community: The Unresolved Questions”, in *Faith in the Midst of Faiths*, 101.

⁸⁹⁰ For a full account of the origins of the WCC Dialogue, see “Christian in Dialogue with Men of Other Faiths” *International Review of Missions*, 382-391.

⁸⁹¹ WCC, *My Neighbour's Faith and Mine: Theological Discoveries Through Interfaith Dialogue*, Geneva, WCC, 1986, vii.

⁸⁹² *Ibid.*, viii.

Many other ecumenical bodies responded to the vision of the WCC by borrowing from its 'Guidelines' to form theirs.⁸⁹³

The 'Guidelines' of the WCC is a treasury of resources on how to proceed with dialogue. And in order to allay the fears of those who were suspicious of dialogue, the WCC 'Guidelines' says:

Indeed as Christians enter into dialogue with their commitment to Jesus Christ, time and again the relation of dialogue gives opportunity for **authentic witness. Thus to member Churches of the WCC we feel able with integrity to commend the way of dialogue** [emphasis mine] as one in which Jesus Christ can be confessed in the world today...⁸⁹⁴

Dialogue therefore is an instrument that fosters a responsible attitude towards the people of other faiths in our pluralistic world. On the same grounds, dialogue can be an ample tool for conflict transformation within the context of a theology of hospitality.

All African Council of Churches (AACC)

Before the formation of the AACC in 1963, some surveys were carried out on Islam in Africa by some African Churches in collaboration with their Western partners. This led to the launching of the 'Islam in Africa Project' (IAP) in 1958⁸⁹⁵ with the aim of having a better understanding of Islam for the promotion of peaceful relations with Muslims.⁸⁹⁶ These marked the first major efforts of the Church towards Christian-Muslim dialogue in Africa.

After the Uppsala Assembly of WCC in 1968 in which dialogue with men of other faiths and ideologies (DFI) was stressed, the AACC held its second General Assembly (in 1969) in Abidjan, giving attention to the issue of Islam in Africa. The Assembly noted the need to promote true dialogue between Christians and Muslims

⁸⁹³ Kenneth Cracknell's *Towards a New Relationship: Christians and People of Other Faith* (London: Epworth Press, 1986), 117. Four principles of dialogue were crafted out of the WCC document by the BCC, 115-124.

⁸⁹⁴ WCC, *Guidelines on Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies*, Geneva, World Council of Churches, 1979, p.11. See also S. Wesley Ariarajah, *Not Without My Neighbour: Issues in Interfaith Relation* (Geneva: WCC Publication, 1999), 18.

⁸⁹⁵ CMS, "The Christian Church and Islam in West Africa" (London, SCM, 1955)

⁸⁹⁶ Joseph Kenny, "Christian-Muslim Relations in Nigeria", *Islam-Christianity*, Pontificio Istituto di Studi, Arabi, Roma No. 5 (November 30, 1979), 13.

and resolved to intensify the IAP.⁸⁹⁷ With the adoption of the interim policy statement and Guidelines on Dialogue in Addis Ababa in January 1971 by the WCC, the AACC carried out several dialogue programmes in partnership with the WCC.⁸⁹⁸ Thus in September, 1973, the AACC in collaboration with the Theological Education Fund (TEF) held an exploratory consultation in Ibadan, Nigeria, at the Pastoral Institute.⁸⁹⁹ Following this, in July 1974, DFI and 'Faith and Order' organized another inter-faith dialogue at Legon, Ghana.⁹⁰⁰

In 1985, the IAP came to be known as the Project for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA). According to Akinade, the project was to help African Christians attain better understanding of Islam and to create avenues and resources for Christian-Muslim dialogue.⁹⁰¹ PROCMURA has consistently emphasized that the path to progress for African Muslims and Christians is a radical change in their mutual attitudes to each other from rivalry and discord, to accord and community, by developing the capacity for dialogue.⁹⁰²

The three ecumenical bodies mentioned above have special links with the issues of interfaith dialogue in Nigeria. The history of current interfaith dialogue in Nigeria is traced back to the (November 28, 1974) Christian-Muslim dialogue which was held at the behest of the Catholic Church at Ibadan. This is definitely connected to Vatican II.⁹⁰³ Since this period, several other programmes of interfaith dialogue have been organized. In 1982, a conference on Christian-Muslim dialogue was held in Ibadan, jointly organized by the Institute of Church and Society and IAP. The basic issue of the conference was how the Church was to respond to the Muslim

⁸⁹⁷ Emmanuel Martey, *African Theology: Inculturation and Liberation*, (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1993), 40.

⁸⁹⁸ WCC *Guidelines*, iv.

⁸⁹⁹ WCC, "The Wholeness of Human Life: Christian Involvement in Mankind's Inner Dialogue with Primal World-Views", *SE/52 Study Encounter*, WCC, 1973, Vol. IX (4), 1. (pp. 1-20.)

⁹⁰⁰ Kofi Asare Opoku, "The WCC and ATR", *Some Thoughts on the Way Forward*. Unpublished paper delivered at Dialogue Working Group meeting at Casablanca, Morocco, June 19-20, 1989.

⁹⁰¹ Akintunde E. Akinade, "Islamic Challenges in African Christianity" in *African Christianity: An African Story* ed. Ogbu Kalu (Pretoria: University of Pretoria, 2005), 136-137.

⁹⁰² Akintunde E. Akinade, "The Precarious Agenda; Christian-Muslim Relations in Contemporary Nigeria", Public Lecture, Ibadan, 2002.

⁹⁰³ Victor Chukwulozie, *Muslim-Christian Dialogue in Nigeria* (Ibadan: Daystar Press, 1986), 74.

community.⁹⁰⁴ This conference significantly involved the Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN) which is a member of both the AACC and the WCC.

In recent years, more attention has been given to the issue of dialogue in many parts of Northern Nigeria. For instance, in the early 1990s, Archbishop David Windibiziri, leader of the Lutheran Church of Christ, began to bring religious leaders together through the Jos branch of CAN to discuss how to respond to the growing tensions between Christians and Muslims. The initial response was low but after the tragedies of September 7, 2001 in Jos and September 11, 2001 in the USA, interest in these meetings grew significantly.⁹⁰⁵ Similarly, after the religious clashes of Jos (2001) and Yelwa-Shendam (2004), Archbishop Ignatius Kaigama of Jos produced his book *Dialogue of Life* as a guide for Muslims and Christians in the pursuit of peace and unity in the state.⁹⁰⁶ His work, which I view to be an outstanding contribution to peace building and conflict transformation in Nigeria, is a contextualization of Vatican II and its legacies.

From the foregoing, I argue that dialogue has become a valuable instrument for developing and sustaining harmonious relationships between the Church and people of other faiths and it has the capacity to foster peaceful coexistence in Nigeria. Inter-religious dialogue operates at various levels. It includes the level of living together as people of different faiths ('dialogue of life'), working together for common good, cooperating together, praying together and having theological reflections together.⁹⁰⁷ The ecumenical views give strength and basis for the development and sustenance of a theology of hospitality. Without intra/inter faith dialogue, there cannot be meaningful hospitality and without hospitality, there cannot be meaningful dialogue. Hospitality therefore is maintained by unbroken dialogue while dialogue leads to transformation only within the purview of hospitality.

⁹⁰⁴ Joseph Abodunrin Oladupo Ige, "Interfaith Dialogue as an Antidote to Religious Crisis in Nigeria, A B.A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Religious Studies, University of Jos, July 1991, 47.

⁹⁰⁵ Nelly van Doorn-Harder, "On not Throwing Stones – Christian and Muslim Conflict in Nigeria", (www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1058/is_3_120/ai_97450763/print).

⁹⁰⁶ Ignatius A. Kaigama, *Dialogue of Life: An Urgent Necessity for Nigerian Muslims and Christians* (Jos: Fab Education Books, 2006).

⁹⁰⁷ Wijsen, 44.

But there must be caution at this point to Protestant Christians in Nigeria which the Catholics may not require, in view of the legacy of Vatican II.⁹⁰⁸ As Idowu-Fearon observed, Protestants are suspicious of both the Vatican II and the WCC/AACC on the matter of the Great Commission given to the Church by the Lord.⁹⁰⁹ He therefore counselled (fellow) Protestants/Evangelicals to learn about inter-faith dialogue from the Catholic Church and from contemporary ecumenical bodies.⁹¹⁰ This is a *sine qua non* for the practice of the theology of hospitality. Dialogue in this context therefore makes the Christian free to bear witness to the risen Christ among people of other faiths. It does not repudiate mission, but renounces a ‘one-way’ pattern of mission in which those who speak and act in the name of Christ fail to listen to and learn from those to whom they are sent.⁹¹¹ This depends on the grace of hospitality.

The Sources of the Theology of Hospitality

By ‘sources’, I mean the origin of or the place from where reflections on the theology of hospitality is obtained. There are three main sources of the Theology of Hospitality as conceived in this thesis. They are the Bible, Christian Tradition and religious pluralism as experienced in Nigeria. But a quick caveat on the plurality of religions is important at this point as it relates to my reflections on a theology of hospitality. Jacques Dupuis says:

A theology cannot be at once Christian-Muslim-Hindu or whatever; it needs to be either one or the other. In other words every theology is either confessional (in the best sense of the word) or does not exist.⁹¹²

I therefore affirm here that the theology of hospitality being recommended for conflict transformation in Nigeria is first of all Christian and primarily aimed towards the pastoral duties of the Church. Although the religious conflicts of Nigeria involved both Christians and Muslims, it seems appropriate to have a

⁹⁰⁸ According to Kaigama, the Catholic Church in Nigeria teaches her children to engage in dialogue with Muslims at all levels in accordance with Vatican II. See Ignatius A. Kaigama, *Dialogue of Life*, 22.

⁹⁰⁹ Idowu-Fearon, *Reconciling a Religiously-Divided Community*, 31-32.

⁹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 45.

⁹¹¹ WCC publication, “Christian in Dialogue with Men of Other Faiths”

International Review of Mission Vol. LXXVIII, No. 307, July 1988. Geneva, WCC, 1988. 382-383.

⁹¹² Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology*, 6.

familiar starting point. In their study of sectarianism in Northern Ireland, Clegg and Liechty suggested as follows:

One's own sectarianism is the only kind one can necessarily do anything about, however, which makes it a natural and appropriate starting point. Furthermore, taking responsibility for one's own sectarianism may do more to encourage others to do the same than any amount of blame might do.⁹¹³

Therefore, the primary audience for this theology is the Church even though it is hoped that this will be of immense benefit to Muslims as well. This agrees with Howard Yoder's caution to the Church on 'jettisoning the particular' in the matters of relationships with people of other faiths.⁹¹⁴ Yoder believed that "any attempt to destroy particularity ends in the formation of another particular."⁹¹⁵ Hence, an attempt to develop a theology of hospitality does not suggest a 'general' theology. Rather, it is a Christian approach which is to aid the pastoral duties of the Church and which other religions may emulate or enhance.

But the warning which Dupuis gives above has another side. He contends further that while theologies which deal with religions are confessional to one faith, "a Christian theology of religions must [also] adopt a global perspective which embraces in its vision the entirety of the religious experience of humankind."⁹¹⁶ Thus Dupuis advocates openness from Christian theology that promotes mutual enrichment through dialogue with other religions.⁹¹⁷ For Nigeria to benefit from this principle, the Christian theology of hospitality suggested here must be kept dialogically open to conversation with and enrichment from Islam. This is all the more so because the conflicts being studied are inter-religious and while a biblical perspective is imperative to the issues of peace; an Islamic perspective is also of immense importance.

⁹¹³ Joseph Liechty and Cecilia Clegg, *Moving Beyond Sectarianism: Religion, Conflict and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland* (Dublin: The Columba Press, 2001), 18.

⁹¹⁴ Mark Thiessen Nation, "Toward a Theology for Conflict Transformation: Learning from John Howard Yoder", *The Mennonite Quarterly Review*, Vol. 80, No 1, 2006, 46-47.

⁹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 51

⁹¹⁶ Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology*, 6.

⁹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 7.

The task of transformation is placed on the Church in Nigeria, specifically in Jos and Maiduguri, with the hope that its active response will engender similar actions among Muslims. Nigeria today has a great need for religious hospitality because the numerous conflicts have greatly reinforced religious boundaries. Bernhard Asen has argued that the greatest challenge to religion today is no longer secularization, but how to deal with the religious ‘other’ or where to place the perceived ‘outsider’ within the framework of one’s faith.⁹¹⁸ This is the need in Nigeria. Hospitality is therefore a call on religion not to merely tolerate the perceived ‘other’, but to welcome him/her and accept people who do not believe as one does.⁹¹⁹

The Bible and Hospitality

Both the Old Testament (OT) and the New Testament (NT) are replete with the merits of hospitality. In fact Christians are commanded to be *given* to hospitality. The word translated *given* in the original Greek could best be translated as *pursue* or *chase after*.⁹²⁰ That shows that hospitality is a virtue that must be backed up by concrete positive action. In the OT, several ‘stranger’, ‘guest’, ‘host’, and ‘foreigner’ situations are recorded which involved both individuals and nations. Several factors were responsible for such states of affairs, including the protection of self and family from the threats of famine, war or death.⁹²¹ Therefore we find the account of Abraham’s escape to Canaan/Egypt to be protected by Pharaoh (Gen. 12:10f), Isaac’s escape to Gerar during famine to be protected by Abimelek (Gen. 26:1f), the escape of Jacob and Elimelech and their families to Egypt and Moab respectively due to hunger (Gen. 47:1f; Ruth 1:1f), and the escape of Moses from Egypt to Midian in his flight from Pharaoh (Ex. 2:15f; Acts 7:29f).⁹²² In each of these cases, it was those who were ‘outside’ of the ‘elect’ people of God who received, protected and restored the ‘insiders’ of Yahweh’s covenant relationship

⁹¹⁸ Bernhard A. Asen, “From Acceptance to Inclusion: The Stranger (*ger*) in the OT Tradition” in *Christianity and the Stranger* ed. Francis W. Nichols (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 16.

⁹¹⁹ Ibid.

⁹²⁰ <http://www.missionarycareministry.org/hospitality.php>

⁹²¹ Jose E. Ramirez Kidd, *Alterity and Identity in Israel* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1999), 14.

⁹²² Ibid.

through their hospitality. For instance, in the case of Moses, not only was he protected by Jethro the ‘priest’ of Median, this unknown priest accommodated, fed and employed him, giving him a wife, with whom Moses had children. In later years, this same ‘priest’, though not a believer in Yahweh the God of Israel; gave Moses profound counsel on how to lead the people of God.⁹²³ He taught Moses how to do the work of God better. In each of the cases mentioned above, the practice of hospitality prevailed without diluting the spirituality of the persons involved. This attitude is essential for Nigerian contemporary religiosity. For many Christians in Nigeria, particularly in regions where violent religious conflicts have occurred, hospitality towards the adherents of other faiths appears to be a major challenge and sometimes unrealistic. In my view, the Church in Jos and Maiduguri is expected to embrace a fresh understanding of biblical hospitality. The Church must understand the mind of God towards the religious ‘other’ in order that there will be a renewal of relationships between Christians and Muslims in the country.

Not only were great OT heroes guests of and foreigners to other nations, they also played host to ‘strangers’. Both Abraham and Lot hosted ‘angels’ unknowingly (Gen. 18, 19) and the law prescribed the rights of aliens/strangers in various ways (Num. 35:15; Deut. 5:14; 14:21, 29; 26:11).⁹²⁴ In fact the Israelites were ceaselessly reminded: “Do not ill-treat an alien or oppress him, for you were aliens in Egypt” (Ex. 22:21, NIV). Also, they were told: “When an alien lives with you in your land, do not ill-treat him. The alien living with you must be treated as one of your native born. Love him as yourself, for you were strangers in Egypt. I am the Lord your God” (Lev. 19: 33-34, NIV).

Although some OT passages confirm the choice of the Jewish nation to the exclusion of some other nations (I Sam. 15:2-3; Neh. 10:30-31), mainly based on the moral misdeeds of those nations, we have tried to show that the OT is inherently committed to the acceptance of other kinds of foreigners (Deut. 23:3-9).⁹²⁵ Further, the OT ascertains the dignity of all humanity and shows clearly that people who were

⁹²³ The Bible, Exodus 2: 11-22; 18.

⁹²⁴ Kidd, 14.

‘outside’ of the covenant people of God also had great insights of the truth of God.

According to Kristeva:

The universalism of the prophets, from Amos to Jeremiah, asserts even more strongly the idea that all mankind is respectable in its intrinsic dignity – and this before Greek philosophy and Stoic cosmopolitanism. The poor, widows and widowers, orphans, servants, foreigners are greeted with equal justice.⁹²⁶

The integration of foreigners into the Jewish community was an acceptable practice which accorded them the status of the ‘chosen people’ of God. The “privilege of being chosen is nevertheless accessible to any individual,”⁹²⁷ as epitomized in the story of Ruth the Moabitess. And although during Ruth’s period a foreigner’s absorption depended on identifying with Israel’s dogma, Kristeva opines it was to shield Israel from “barbarian excesses” and “such a concept is no longer compatible with a contemporary attitude that claims the right to a difference and the dignity of every denomination...”⁹²⁸

Moving from the OT to the NT, one finds tremendous priority accorded to hospitality in the teachings and deeds of Jesus. Harold Wells has accused Christian theologians of downplaying the teaching and deeds of Jesus Christ, particularly disparaging the classical creeds of the Patristic period which took a gigantic leap from the accounts of his Virgin Birth to his Death under Pontius Pilate.⁹²⁹ The teachings of Jesus encapsulate the ideal attitude to be accorded even the most extreme ‘other’, namely, the enemy. Jesus taught that the enemy is to be engaged with extraordinary love in the words: “Love your enemy, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who treat you badly” (Luke 6: 27-28). According to Nouwen, these words of Jesus are the cornerstone of His message, the core of holiness and the test of peacemakers. While the ordinary person would think that his enemies would deserve anger, rejection, hatred and disdain, Jesus called on

⁹²⁵ Julia Kristeva, *Strangers to Ourselves* translated by Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 65 -66.

⁹²⁶ Ibid., 68.

⁹²⁷ Ibid., 69.

⁹²⁸ Julia Kristeva, *Nations Without Nationalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 25.

⁹²⁹ Harold Wells, “Theology for Reconciliation: Biblical Perspectives of Forgiveness and Grace”, in *The Reconciliation of Peoples: Challenge to the Churches* eds. Gregory Baum and Harold Wells (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1997), 5.

His followers to treat them with love. In order therefore to demonstrate a true understanding of the love of God, Christians must love all human persons “regardless of their sex, religion, race, colour, nationality, age or intelligence – with the same bold, unconditional love.”⁹³⁰

Jesus also commended a Roman centurion (Matt. 8:5-10) and a Samaritan leper (Luke 17:17-18),⁹³¹ and implied that God’s blessing was upon aliens like the widow of Zarephath in Sidon and Naaman of Syria (Luke 4:26-27).⁹³² In his lifetime, He often dined with the marginalized and was challenged by Pharisees for socializing with sinners (Luke 7:33-35; 19:1-10; 11:37-44; Mark 14:3-9). In the Parable of the Last Judgment (Matthew 25:31- 46), Jesus offered a meeting with him in the meeting with the stranger; “a Christological dimension of hospitality”⁹³³ (“...whatever you did for one of the least brothers of mine, you did for me” - Matt. 25:40). Gordon Oliver contends that the ministry of Jesus revealed three categories of hospitality. First, Jesus showed through the parable of the ‘messianic banquet’ in Luke 14:12-24, that His honoured guests were the marginalized poor, lame and blind. Second, with His arms stretched out on the cross, Jesus showed God’s loving arms held out to the most undeserving sinner. Third, the reinstatement of Peter after the resurrection was an invitation to Peter to come out of his spiritual hiding place by his sin and receive God’s offer of forgiveness.⁹³⁴

Quite notably, the scriptures which have been used to understand the biblical foundations for dialogue have also been used as a foundation for hospitality. Friedli argues for dialogue through the parables of the Good Samaritan and the Last Judgement in which people were interrogated “not about their relationship to God the Father but about their relationship to man the brother, who must be accepted as the

⁹³⁰ Henri Nouwen, *Peacework: Prayer, Resistance and Community* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2005), 70-71.

⁹³¹ Wells, 6.

⁹³² Ibid.

⁹³³ Christine D. Pohl and Pamela J. Buck, *Study Guide for Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001), 9.

⁹³⁴ Gordon Oliver, *Living Forgiveness: Hospitality and Reconciliation* (Cambridge: Grove Books Limited, 2000), 3-4.

neighbour at any given moment, irrespective of his race, nationality, religion or culture”.⁹³⁵ This is also the appeal of hospitality.

John Koenig views hospitality in the NT from the point of view of the prominence accorded to ‘table’ ministry among marginal people in the Synoptic Gospels. He recalls Jesus’ famous hospitality stories of being in the home of Zacchaeus, the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin and the lost son (Luke 15) in which it was repeated ‘come celebrate with me’, and several accusations of Jesus as eating with tax collectors and sinners (Mark 2:16).⁹³⁶ There were also the hospitality accounts of Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38-42; John 11:1-3); house Churches of hospitality (Acts 13:42-52; 14:1; 16:13-15; 17:1-4); and hospitality by Gentiles like Cornelius, Lydia and the jailer of Philippi (Acts 10:44-11:3; 16:15). In the Roman jail, Paul welcomed people to his house (Acts 28:30-31). Arguing that the Johannine literature, Pastoral Epistles, I Peter and Hebrews contain many sayings on hospitality, he sums up his claims that “a good case can be made that the combined testimony of Jesus, Paul and Luke provides a substantial and appropriate cross section for our study of New Testament hospitality.”⁹³⁷ He contends also that the Church’s three main festivals, namely, Christmas, Easter and Pentecost, are laden with events of hospitality as the stranger offered what at first appeared to be impossible to give. In that vein, the child in the manger, the stranger on the Emmaus road and the wind of the Holy Spirit, had to do with the divine stranger offering blessings in each case.⁹³⁸ He enjoins Christians to return to the biblical vision of hospitality in the manner of God’s loving embrace of all nations because “in this gracious space, the biblical sources tell us, strangers received will enlarge our total well-being rather than diminish it”.⁹³⁹ Quoting Nouwen, he said:

When hostility is converted into hospitality, then fearful strangers...become guests revealing to their hosts the promise they are carrying with them. Then in fact the distinction between host and guest proves to be artificial and evaporates in the

⁹³⁵ Friedli, “Dialogue between the Religions”, 29.

⁹³⁶ John Koenig, *New Testament Hospitality* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 2.

⁹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁹³⁹ *Ibid.*

recognition of the new found unity...guest and host can reveal their most precious gifts and bring *new life* [italics mine] to each other.⁹⁴⁰

Thus the call of NT hospitality is a call for the removal of hostility until unity and a 'new life' is attained between guest and host. It shows us that God is always creating space for mutuality among mankind instead of enmity. Reconsidering hospitality in the ministry of the NT, especially as exemplified in the words and deeds of Jesus Christ, is the Church's starting point, not only for a new relationship with Muslims in Nigeria, but for self-discovery in its mission to the world. The Church must rediscover the nature of the early Church in which "hospitality was crucial to its survival, identity and growth".⁹⁴¹ This is also what can lead to conflict transformation in Nigeria and the Church in Jos and Maiduguri must honestly be rooted in this understanding of its identity and ministry; its being and doing.

Hospitality in the Christian Tradition

The legacy of the Christian Church is a rich resource for understanding biblical hospitality. Due to space constraint, only a few instances will be mentioned. As far back as the 6th Century, St. Benedict's Rule in the monasteries included the familiar and often-quoted phrase: "Let everyone that comes be received as Christ".⁹⁴² This is an indication of the prominent position which hospitality occupied in every Benedictine monastery. Benedictine hospitality was beyond the application of the expected social graces towards guests which included superficial smiles and warm receptions. For Benedict, hospitality meant that everyone who came, the poor, the traveller, and the curious, whether they belonged to the Christian faith or not, whatever their status or educational background, should be received with genuine acceptance. However, in view of the need to protect monastic serenity, he cautioned against "lingering with guests".⁹⁴³

⁹⁴⁰ Ibid., 5-6.

⁹⁴¹ Pohl and Buck, 9.

⁹⁴² Jane Michele McClure, *The Rule of St. Benedict*, <http://www.thedome.org/AboutUs/rule.html>, 11/7/08.

⁹⁴³ Ibid.

In a 17th century discourse on hospitality, Caleb Dalechamp called attention to the rewards of hospitality as demonstrated in the Bible as follows: For Abraham's hospitality, a son was given; for Lot, life was preserved; for Jethro, a son-in-law was given; for Rahab, immortal praise and deliverance was secured; for Boaz, he was blessed with Obed, for the widow of Zarephath, there was miraculous increase; for the Shunamite, a son was given; for the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, there was illumination; for Publius of Malta, his father was healed; for Gaius, there was a commendable report; and in the parable of the last judgment, hospitality has promise even for life to come.⁹⁴⁴ With such exhortations the Christian Church held on to the virtue of hospitality.

Luke Bretherton recalls the 'Stranger's Friends Society' founded in London in 1785 by a group of Methodists, which John Wesley described as having the objective of providing relief for the poor, sick and 'friendless strangers'. Following the parable of the Good Samaritan, the society reasoned that the question 'who is my neighbour?' (Luke 10:29) was to be answered through hospitality towards vulnerable, friendless strangers.⁹⁴⁵ Also, during the Nazi persecution of the Jews, the Christians in the Protestant village of Le Chambo, in the mountains of Southern France, opened their homes to hide thousands of Jews, both at their own expense and risk. Inspired by Numbers 35:11 and the parable of the Good Samaritan, the people saw their village as the biblical 'City of Refuge'. Their hospitality almost cost the life of their pastor, Andre Trocme, who was arrested in the winter of 1943. He survived the imprisonment.⁹⁴⁶ Reporting his study of this Christian community, Philip Hallie, confessed: "I

⁹⁴⁴ Caleb Dalechamp, *Christian Hospitality: Handled Common-Place-Wise in the Chapel of Trinity College in Cambridge* (Cambridge: TH Buck, 1632), 85.

⁹⁴⁵ Bretherton, 139.

⁹⁴⁶ Jim Forest, *Making Friends of Enemies: Reflections on the Teachings of Jesus* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1988), 38-39.

learned that the opposite of cruelty is not simply freedom from the cruel relationship; it is *hospitality*....”⁹⁴⁷

The attitudes of religious movements historically concerning hospitality have not been consistent. Kriteva has argued that although religious movements (and cosmopolitanism) granted rights to foreigners which were equal to those of citizens, foreigners who did not share their faith sometimes faced “new exclusions and persecutions” in the Middle Ages.⁹⁴⁸ Hospitality therefore sometimes served as a means of proselytizing.⁹⁴⁹ Yet, on the whole, as demonstrated in the examples above, the Christian tradition provides numerous examples of hospitality, the kind that is urgently desired in Nigeria. Hence, it is my argument here that the tradition of the Church is a fantastic source for a theology of hospitality for conflict transformation in Nigeria.

Hospitality and Pluralism: Examples of Nigerian Indigenous Cultural Systems

As discussed in chapter one, religious pluralism is a basic part of Nigeria’s multiculturalism. According to Ade Ajayi⁹⁵⁰, the Yoruba religion has demonstrated a commendable spirit of accommodation (hospitality) which is worthy of emulation by Islam and Christianity. He contends that traditional Yoruba religions give space for various religious practices without destroying social cohesion. For instance, it is possible for a husband to be an *Ogun* (god of iron) adherent while the wife is a devotee of *Yemoja* (river goddess) without clashes between them. This is the nature of the multiplicity of indigenous religions even within same families. Again, with the arrival of Islam and Christianity, the Yoruba religions generously granted accommodation. Ajayi argues that an *Ifa* legend was said to have supported the coming to Abeokuta of one *Shehu*, a Muslim *mallam* from Ilorin and enjoined that he be allowed to

⁹⁴⁷ Miriam Schulman and Amal Barkouki-Winter, *The Extra Mile: The ancient virtue of hospitality imposes duties on host and guest.* <http://www.scu.edu/ethics/publications/ie/v11n1/hospitality.html>

⁹⁴⁸ Kriteva, 97.

⁹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 87.

⁹⁵⁰ J.F. Ade Ajayi, “Religious Pluralism And Tolerance Among The Yorubas” USAAfricaDialogue@googlegroups.com, September 13, 2006.

settle for missionary activities. The *Egba* (Abeokuta Yoruba) were to give him wives and allow their children to join him in the practice of his religion. In later years, the same *Ifa* was said to have predicted the coming of white missionaries to Abeokuta and asked the people to be favourably disposed towards them, pleading that they also be allowed to establish and practise their religion. That was the extent of hospitality extended to the 'new' (guest) religions by the Yoruba (host) religions and that principle has continued to sustain cordiality among the Yoruba.⁹⁵¹ Ajayi puts the contemporary Yoruba situation thus:

In Yoruba land today, there exist the natural admixture of religious faiths within individual families, which, nevertheless, live happily together, and, this level of tolerance is the direct effect of tolerance inherited from the traditional religion whose accommodation and toleration paved way for Islam and Christianity.⁹⁵²

Ajayi gives the credit for the tolerance and peaceful coexistence exhibited by Yoruba Muslims and Christians to the accommodation and tolerance of the Yoruba indigenous religions. He also attributes Bishop Crowther's inter-faith methods to his Yoruba ancestry. Crowther worked cordially with the adherents of the indigenous religions and Islam, from whom he borrowed linguistic concepts for the translation of the Bible into Yoruba.⁹⁵³ In that experience, Bishop Crowther was inevitably involved in dialogue with adherents of other religions. Ajayi thus enjoins Muslim and Christian leaders in Nigeria to accept without option, a policy of co-operation, toleration, mutual respect and understanding in order to ensure social stability and sustainable development.⁹⁵⁴

Similarly, Wole Soyinka and Ulli Beier spoke extensively of the tolerant and accommodating posture of the Yoruba religions as opposed to Islam and Christianity in Nigeria. Soyinka commended the Yoruba religions for never waging a religious

⁹⁵¹ Although there is generally peaceful coexistence between the Yoruba traditional religions and the two 'guest' religions (Islam and Christianity), occasional skirmishes occur. See *Nigerian Tribune*, June 24, 2008.

⁹⁵² Ibid.

⁹⁵³ Crowther's strategy in translating the Bible into Yoruba is an indication of his dialogical strategy in his relationship with ATR and Islam.

⁹⁵⁴ Ajayi, USAAfricaDialogue@googlegroups.com

war in the form of jihads or crusades.⁹⁵⁵ In recent times, Yoruba religious leaders have demonstrated amiable qualities of inter-religious hospitality. For instance, at the death of the philanthropist and renowned Yoruba Muslim leader, Wahab Folawiyo, the *Baba Adinni* (Father of Islamic Religion), Bishop Bolanle Gbonigi of the Anglican Communion praised him as an illustrious Yoruba son and for his role in encouraging religious advancement and tolerance in Nigeria. Gbonigi commiserated with the family and prayed for them.⁹⁵⁶ Similarly, at the funeral of Chief Lamidi Adedibu, a prominent Muslim leader and politician in Ibadan, not only were Yoruba Christians present, two Yoruba clergymen were in attendance as a mark of respect for Adedibu who ‘sponsored’ them on pilgrimage to Jerusalem.⁹⁵⁷ This kind of inter-religious interaction is very common among the Yoruba and it is believed to be influenced by the indigenous Yoruba religions.

The model of interfaith relations mentioned above is a source of an emerging theology of hospitality. It demonstrates that the concept of hospitality is not new in Nigeria and shows that religious tolerance and peaceful coexistence have been understood and practiced for a long time in Yoruba land. The need for Christians and Muslims in Northern Nigeria to learn from the Yoruba model is quite urgent and supportive of a theology of hospitality.

Ben Udoh has observed the practice of hospitality among the Ibibio-Efik families of Nigeria as part of the broader nature of the African cultural system. He said:

The characteristic nature of family is its capacity to extend itself. It brings together the living and the dead, the unborn and the stranger, human community and natural environment. To this end, the African System is far from being closed. On the contrary its inclusive and open characteristic accounts for the ease with which the continent was able to contain various colonial bodies in the last century and the Arabs before. There is always room for extra people, for more improvement and for additional symbols. Hence the sense of belonging and an attitude of solidarity!⁹⁵⁸

⁹⁵⁵ <http://www.yoruba.org/Magazine/Summer97/File3.htm>, Wole Soyinka and Yoruba Religion: A Conversation with Ulli Beier, Summer, Vol. 3, No 3, 1997.

⁹⁵⁶ Julius Alabi, “Fashola, Others at Fida for Folawiyo”, *The Guardian*, June 9, 2008.

⁹⁵⁷ Bolade Omonijo, Emmanuel Oladosu, Bisi Oladele and Osehaye Okwuofu, “Obasanjo, Others bid Adedibu Fairwell”, *The Nation*, June 13, 2008.

⁹⁵⁸ Enyi Ben Udoh, *Guest Christology: An Interpretative View of Christological Problem*, Thesis (Ph.D), Microfiche, Princeton Theological Seminary, 1983, 183-184.

The above shows that Arab and European incursion into Africa were tolerated due to Africa's system of hospitality and its willingness to provide space for all. Udoh contends further that every African community has its own version of stranger-host relationships and commends African nations for their ability to contain refugee crisis. He attributes Africa's open door policy towards refugees to be due to its capacity to absorb its guests as embedded in the traditional African system of family and kinship. Consequently, no matter the nationality, culture or number of guests which Africans play host to, their extended family and kinship ethos of humanitarianism and hospitality make accommodation possible and easy.⁹⁵⁹

Also, among the Igbo and the Ijaws of South Eastern Nigeria, hospitality is a very important aspect of culture. The Igbo go as far as occasioning hospitality with the tripartite ritual of offering, breaking and sharing kola nuts as sign of welcoming guests into their communities.⁹⁶⁰ Udoh writes elaborately on this kola nut ritual in Nigeria and contends that the nuts, which are not a scarce commodity in any part of the country, are the commonest symbol of guest reception in Nigeria, though the ceremonies are performed differently from place to place. In Eastern Nigeria, when a visitor arrives in the family or community, he is offered kola nuts as a symbol of 'welcome' into the social life of the people. The adage for this ritual is: "He who brings kola (nuts) brings life". What this means is that the provision of kola nuts by the host to the guest is a sign of being positively disposed towards the guest in the family or community. Although the ritual of sharing the nuts is not the final stage of the acceptance of the guest into the community, it marks the beginning of an encounter which is anticipated to grow and prosper. At its highest level, the guest is transformed into a citizen of the community.⁹⁶¹ Based on the foregoing, I argue that the model of hospitality being proposed in this thesis rests on familiar indigenous systems. And since hospitality has proved to be

⁹⁵⁹ Ibid., 194-5.

⁹⁶⁰ http://www.kwenu.com/igbo/igbowebpages/Igbo.dir/Culture/culture_and_socialization.html

⁹⁶¹ Udoh, 200.

useful in eliciting and preserving relationships among Nigerians, its potentiality in Nigeria may be explored for building a better relationship between Christians and Muslims.

Hospitality and Islam

Because the theology of hospitality being proposed is mainly concerned with the transformation of Christian-Muslim conflict, it is germane to mention a few ideas of hospitality in Islam. While the bulk of such a task will be reserved for Islamic scholars, it is pertinent to show that the concept of hospitality is also a major Islamic commodity. This concurs with the approach of comparative theology and Prophet Mohammed provided numerous teachings to justify and exalt the virtue of hospitality in Islam.

Scholars agree that there are convergences in many respects among the 'Abrahamic' religions, namely, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.⁹⁶² Hence in the Qur'an, as well as in the Hebrew and Christian scriptures, the issues of hospitality are quite central and sometimes similar. In all their scriptures, mistreatment of strangers is a sure way to incur divine fury.⁹⁶³ Schulman and Barkouki-Winter said: "With roots in Judaism, Christianity and Islam, hospitality provides a paradigm for peace making."⁹⁶⁴ The major sources for insights into Islamic perspectives are the Qur'an and the *hadith* (traditions), particularly the traditions about the Prophet (*Sunna*).⁹⁶⁵ These textual sources provide a variety of insights on the subject of hospitality in Islam.

I begin my exploration of Islamic hospitality with the story of Ibrahim (Abraham) and the divine strangers which are recorded in the traditions of the three 'Abrahamic' religions. The three traditions contrast the behavior of Abraham, who honors the strangers approaching his tent, with that of the Sodomites, who demand that the same

⁹⁶² See <http://abrahamicroeligion.net/>

⁹⁶³ Jane Page, "The Theology of Hospitality", <http://uustatesboro.uuism.net/Hospitality.htm>, October 14, 2007.

⁹⁶⁴ Miriam Schulman and Amal Barkouki-Winter "The Extra Mile", <http://www.scu.edu/ethics/publications/ie/v11n1/hospitality.html>

⁹⁶⁵ David Herbert, "Islam and Reconciliation: A Hermeneutic and Sociological Approach" in David Tombs and Joseph Liechty eds. *Explorations in Reconciliation: New Directions in Theology*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006, 36-37.

strangers be turned over for rapacious abuse. Again, Ibrahim's nephew Lut (Lot) opens wide his doors and urges the same visitors to stay at his home. He resists the men of Sodom threatening uprising outside his house in demand that the strangers be delivered into their hands. According to the Qur'an, Lut told the people of Sodom: "O' my people! Here are my daughters! They are purer for you! Beware of Allah and degrade me not in (the presence of) my guests. Is there not among you any upright man?"⁹⁶⁶ From these we find a commonality between the The Qur'an and the OT on the theme of hospitality. Lut accepted the guests into his house and would not release them to the men of Sodom.

Some of the teachings on hospitality in Islam are associated with a person's responsibility to his neighbour, the needy, and the general teaching on peace. Significantly, Muslims recognize the brotherhood of man as found in Qur'an (Surah al-Hujurat 49:13) which says: "O people, we created you from the same male and female, and rendered you distinct peoples and tribes, that you may recognize one another..." By this teaching, Muslims are expected to see all human beings as brothers and sisters to/for whom they are responsible.⁹⁶⁷ Also, Qur'an 51:19 says: "A portion of their money was set aside for the beggar and needy". This injunction was said to have been given in Mecca where Muslims lived with non-believers. Therefore, the responsibility of the Muslim was to take care of the suffering 'other' irrespective of race and religion.⁹⁶⁸

Islam also teaches that love for the neighbour is an integral part of love for God. According to Prophet Mohammed, "None of you has faith until you love for your neighbour what you love for yourself"⁹⁶⁹. Thus without love for one's neighbour, there is neither true faith in God nor claim to righteous living. This perception of love for God and love for the neighbour is a major commonality which Islamic leaders have identified between Christianity and Islam.

⁹⁶⁶ The Koran 11:78. <http://www.islam101.com/history/people/prophets/lut.htm>

⁹⁶⁷ Muhammad Al-Khamis, "The Role of Religious Leaders in Peace Building and Sustenance", in *Muslim/Christian Dialogue on Peace in Jos* eds. Dennis Ityavyar and Zacharys Gundu (Jos: Inter-Gender, 2004), 100.

⁹⁶⁸ Ibid., 99.

⁹⁶⁹ *Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Iman*, 67-1, Hadith no. 45.

In an 'Open Letter' to His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI, on October 13, 2007 (On the Occasion of the Eid al-Fitr al-Mubarak 1428 A.H, which was also the first anniversary of the 'Open Letter' of 38 Muslim scholars to H.H. Pope Benedict XVI), Muslim religious leaders affirmed the scriptural basis for peace and understanding in the world.⁹⁷⁰ According to them, the foundation for peace between Islam and Christianity, which they considered concomitant to world peace, are the principles of love for God and love for the neighbour as embedded in the teachings of the Bible and the Qur'an. The letter states: "The Unity of God, the necessity of love for Him, and the necessity of love of the neighbour is thus the common ground between Islam and Christianity"⁹⁷¹ (Al-Ikhlās, 112:1-2; Al-Muzzammil, 73:8). They held that this love is beyond mere words of sympathy, empathy or even prayers. Quoting the Holy Qur'an, they said:

It is not righteousness that ye turn your faces to the East and the West; but righteous is he who believeth in God and the Last Day and the angels and the Scripture and the prophets; and giveth wealth, for love of Him, to kinsfolk and to orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and to those who ask, and to set slaves free; and observeth proper worship and payeth the poor-due (Al-Baqarah 2:177).⁹⁷²

The above shows that Islam desires love which is expressed in concrete altruistic actions towards the neighbour. These actions include generosity, compassion and kindness towards people in need.

Again, Islam teaches that: "Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should be hospitable with his or her guests"⁹⁷³ and by this, the Prophet taught his followers to be welcoming and generous to guests, in particular when they have no family or friends in that country.⁹⁷⁴ Thus in Islam, we have a basis for looking at the theme of hospitality. The tradition belongs to the category of the responsibility that man has towards God and his fellow man. Like Christians, Muslims believe in the oneness of

⁹⁷⁰ http://www.cibedo.de/a_common_word_2.html

⁹⁷¹ Ibid.

⁹⁷² Ibid.

⁹⁷³ <http://www.islamicvoice.com/april.2001/hadith.htm>

⁹⁷⁴ <http://ipaki.com/content/html/29/1097.html>

God (*al Tawhid*), man's responsibility to God (*Ibadah*) and man's responsibility to his fellow man (*Muamalat*).⁹⁷⁵

Hospitality and Jihad

In considering the issue of hospitality in Islam, one important subject which deserves clarification is *jihad*. This is not surprising as Nigerian history constantly brings home the issue of the Uthman Dan Fodio *jihad* (1804-8) which covered a good part of Northern Nigeria. This is quite important not only for Christians, but for Muslims also. During the field interviews, several Muslim respondents opined that many Nigerians, Christians and even Muslims, did not have a proper understanding of what *jihad* means. According to Seyyed Nasr:

Perhaps in modern times in the West no word in the vocabulary of the Islamic religion has been as distorted, maligned, misunderstood, and vilified as the word *jihad*, thanks not only to the Western media looking for demonizing epithets and stereotypes, but also to those extremist Muslims who readily provide them with examples to justify their propagation of the distorted image of this term.⁹⁷⁶

In my view, the clarification needed on this subject matter is not only in the 'West', but everywhere, including Nigeria, and for the interest of all. According to Abu-Nimer, there are three main strands on the subject of *jihad* as means of peace building. First, there are Islamic scholars who support and promote violent *jihad* as means of achieving peace. They sanction the application of physical force and see *jihad* as self-exertion. It is viewed as the ultimate method which Muslims are to use to settle their internal and external disputes. This perception of *jihad* cannot help in understanding a theology of hospitality between religions. Second, there are scholars who hold the position that in some limited and well-defined contexts, Islamic religion and tradition justify the use of violence. Some Qur'anic verses which give impetus to this position include: "Permission to fight is granted to those upon whom war is made, because they are oppressed" (22:39) and, "Fight in the way of God with

⁹⁷⁵ F.T. Lateju, "Pragmatic Approach to Christian-Muslim Relations in Nigeria" in *Ecclesiastes: The Preacher, the Church and the Contemporary Society* eds. Ademola Ishola and Deji Ayegboyin (Ibadan: Baptist Press (Nig.) Limited, 2006), 210.

⁹⁷⁶ Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *The Heart of Islam: Enduring Values for Humanity*, (New York: Harper Collins Books, 2002), 256.

those who fight with you, and do not exceed this limit" (2:190).⁹⁷⁷ The notion of jihad by this group concerns fighting in self-defence. It is more temperate than the earlier one in accepting a theology of hospitality since the issue of self-defence sounds acceptable to most cultures of the world. Third, there are Islamic scholars whose overall perspective and emphasis are based on the potential pacifist and non-violent nature of Islamic religion and tradition. They identify and emphasize values and principles that make such a claim possible. These include: Islam's basic belief in the unity of humankind, the supreme love of the Creator and the obligation of mercy. To this group, *jihad* is the battle within one's self to attain peace with God by subjecting one's passions and by struggling to overcome temptations.⁹⁷⁸ Scholars in this category argue that the use of violence as a means to address conflict or to spread the faith several centuries ago is obsolete for the present age. They claim that even in the life of the Prophet and in Scriptures, the use of violence was a minor element in comparison to teachings on non-violence and peace.⁹⁷⁹ By way of summary, Herbert's reflection on *jihad* is incisive:

It is fair to say, therefore, that Islam's sacred sources... support defensive war, and historically have mostly been understood as legitimising expansive war aimed at extending Muslim political authority. However, this is not the whole story; a number of Muslims have argued that it is necessary to move beyond traditional understandings of relationships with 'others' and that Islamic traditions have deep resources for doing so. Hence there is also a type of literature, smaller than on jihad, but growing, which focuses on core Islamic values...for non-violence.⁹⁸⁰

From the above, I argue that the growing departure from the 'traditional' understanding of *jihad* can be useful for the understanding of this phenomenon in Nigeria. If *jihad* is perceived more as an inner struggle to overcome temptations, then it becomes a resource for peace since conflicts are based on uncontrolled anger and the spirit of vendetta. This understanding strengthens the Islamic concept of hospitality for contemporary Nigeria and conforms to the counsel of Imam Ashafa

⁹⁷⁷ Mohammed Abu-Nimer, "A Framework for Nonviolence and Peacebuilding in Islam", *Journal of Law and Religion*, Vol. 15, No. 1/2 (2000 - 2001), p. 221

⁹⁷⁸ Ibid., 227.

⁹⁷⁹ Ibid., pp. 229-230. Also, when Christians talk of non-violence and peace, it does not erase the historical fact of the Crusades of the Middle Ages which is similar to the theme of jihad.

⁹⁸⁰ Herbert, 43.

who said: “Islam says: ‘create a space for the other’”.⁹⁸¹ That is the path of hospitality and the assurance of conflict transformation. If Muslims in Jos and Maiduguri had adopted the *jihad* in which one strives to master his passions, then the conflicts might have been completely averted.

The Nature of the Theology of Hospitality

By nature, I mean “the quality of anything which makes it what it is, governing its character and behaviour.”⁹⁸² I shall attempt to briefly describe this theology of hospitality in ways which are found comparatively similar in the traditional religions, Islam and Christianity.

First, the theology of hospitality is rooted in God. I have shown in this study that the adherents of the indigenous religions,⁹⁸³ Islam and Christianity, share this fundamental religious position, although with variations. For each of the traditions, God constitutes the foundation of faith. This notion of God serves as a unifying principle and a rallying point for the diversity of the traditions and makes hospitality a possibility. All three traditions accept God as Creator of mankind and all the things in the world. Man’s common origin therefore becomes a pivotal basis for inter-religious interactions and the accommodation of one another. The three religions exalt the worship of the One God they believe and this convergence makes hospitality a possibility.

Second, the theology of hospitality is based on our common humanity. The Bible teaches that man, whatever is his race, persuasion or religion, was created by God in the image of God. The Christian is called to love God and to love his neighbour as himself. The neighbour here is anyone from any background who is in need of the Christian’s act of mercy. The same goes for the Muslim as mentioned in the several passages of the Qur’an above. Also, in the indigenous religions, I have shown that the African family and kinship are avenues for social cohesion and that the welcoming of guests is on the basis of their humanity. I therefore contend that man’s

⁹⁸¹ “The Imam And The Pastor”, Film.

⁹⁸² *The Chambers Dictionary*, 1998.

⁹⁸³ See chapter five.

common humanity, laden with enormous problems, calls for the collective responses of all religious traditions. Like the stranger who is constantly in need of one kind of help or another, our humanity places us in the situation strangers. And since God is concerned about the 'other' (the stranger), it is man's duty to perpetuate the work of God. In Nigeria, irrespective of religious tradition, people suffer from sicknesses, poverty, unemployment, lack of amenities, deprivation, social ills, underdevelopment and many other deplorable situations which bring alienation and call for collective social action. For many people, the basic needs of life are inaccessible. And since all the religious traditions emphasize the importance of mercy and compassion, a common ground for action is already found. Hospitality is therefore conditioned by people's common need of one another in order to make the nation a better place for all. It is in such hospitality that life is made meaningful like in the African adage: 'He who brings kola brings life'. The parable of the Good Samaritan calls on all Christians to be compassionate and loving to all people in need. Also, through the sharing of one's possessions and gifts, the teachings of the Qur'an on the subject of compassion can be daily practiced.⁹⁸⁴ For the Christian s/he is enjoined to show mercy in order to obtain mercy (Matthew 5:7), and to ensure to do good to all men (Galatians 6: 10). It is therefore unlikely for any Christian or Muslim who is faithful to his/her Scriptures to shirk in the responsibility of caring for the neighbour in need. This cannot be adequately carried out without the practice of hospitality which is commanded in the religious traditions. Also, engaging these principles in concrete terms assures better relationship between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria and leads to the transformation of conflict.

Third, the theology of hospitality involves an unbroken thread of communication between men and God and between men and men. This is the implication of the belief in God and the belief in man's common humanity. Without communication, none of the compassionate virtues mentioned above can be actualized. Without communication it is impossible for love to be demonstrated in kind actions. Communication between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria must navigate from the

⁹⁸⁴ Kunirum Osia, "Resolving Religious Crisis in Nigeria: A Search for Points of Convergence", *Dialogue Alliance*, 7, 1, 1993, 45.

cultural practice of ‘greeting’ one another, to the more conscious programme of inter-religious dialogue. Through dialogue, people who are ‘different’ are able to share their common spiritual resources and participate with one another. This helps to bring adherents of the different religions together and strengthens their relationship. It is a proactive approach to mitigating and resolving conflict between them. Osia says “Christian-Muslim dialogue should be aimed at promoting movement towards God [and it] should help to enrich both groups spiritually, to widen their vision, and to help them understand others better.”⁹⁸⁵

Many voices have demonstrated a high regard for the role of dialogue in conflict mitigation. Andrew Wingate gave an example of how dialogue was instrumental in disallowing conflict in Leicester after 9/11. He said the ‘Faith Leaders’ Meeting’ affirmed a written position that attack on any religious tradition in the community would be treated as attack on all the others, and that local Muslims would not be allowed to be scapegoats for what had happened in the USA.⁹⁸⁶ This kind of community dialogue could be of immense benefit to Christians and Muslims in Jos and Maiduguri. It brings about friendship, which is of urgent need in the country. According to James Heft, although dialogue is of immense importance for different purposes, the formation of friendships with people of other religions which comes with dialogue may well be the most important.⁹⁸⁷

Fourth, the theology of hospitality is founded upon man’s common moral concerns. While moral concerns are an endless list, two moral issues are considered imperative in order for the theology of hospitality to be instrumental in conflict transformation in Nigeria. The two moral issues are the issues of justice and peace and they both assist in explaining the nature of the theology of hospitality. I will begin with the issue of justice.

⁹⁸⁵ Osia, 49.

⁹⁸⁶ Andrew Wingate, “Inter Religious Dialogue, Conflict and Reconciliation” in Howard Mellor and Timothy Yates eds. *Mission, Violence and Reconciliation*, Sheffield: Cliff College Publishing, 2004, 149.

⁹⁸⁷ James L. Heft, “Introduction: Religious Sources for Social Transformation in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam” in ed. James Heft, *Beyond Violence: Religious Sources for Social Transformation in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (New York, Fordham University Press, 2004), p. 13.

It matters not how one perceives the meaning of justice, justice is embedded within the conscience of every man. It is like a burning fire urging each man to live justly, uphold justice and to administer justice. Sayyed asserts: “Sacred Scriptures from the Upanishads and the Bible to the Qur’an contain many illuminating passages on the centrality of justice to the moral and spiritual life. Every people and nation speaks of justice even when injustice abounds in the world.”⁹⁸⁸ Justice is therefore a common subject of discussion and everybody is quick to cry out where it is perceived to be absent. Arinze affirms that it is the will of God that within the human family, each person should respect the rights of others. Also, he contends that respect for the rights of others flows from the spirit of justice and that justice itself is an absolute necessity for lasting peace. He gives examples of ways through which justice could manifest to include: respect for life from conception to natural death, respect for the defenseless and the weak, respect for the right to religious freedom for all, equality of citizens, and the elimination of discrimination against people on the grounds of their ethnic origin, social status, and gender.⁹⁸⁹ The Qur’an also holds that it is the duty of all Muslims to show justice to all people, irrespective of their religion, ethnicity or status.⁹⁹⁰ In view of this, it becomes incumbent upon Christians and Muslims to be committed to working for the establishment of human rights as a basic principle of Nigerian society. Osia’s excerpt from the speech of Pope John Paul II to Muslims in Nigeria in 1982 is incisive here. Calling Muslims to join hands with Christians in protesting against violations of human rights, he said: “Why do I speak of these [human rights] issues with you? Because you are Muslims, and like us Christians, you believe in the one God who is the source of all the rights and values of mankind. Furthermore, I am convinced that if we join hands in the name of God we can accomplish much good.”⁹⁹¹

The issues of human rights violation and injustice in Nigeria appear to have thrived due to the lack of a collective voice of Christians and Muslims. The lack of

⁹⁸⁸ Sayyed, 239.

⁹⁸⁹ Francis Cardinal Arinze, *Religions for Peace: A Call for Solidarity to the Religions of the World*, (Darton: Longman and Todd Ltd., 2002), 2.

⁹⁹⁰ Qur’an 60:7-8.

⁹⁹¹ Osia, 50.

hospitality between them has provided the enabling environment for corruption and injustice to bloom. This unbridled injustice continues to fester at the collective disadvantage of the nation. Muslims and Christians, in a context of hospitality, can promote the struggle for the rights of the poor and the search for justice in the nation. If this is done, the situation of conflict will be greatly transformed. The conflicts studied evidenced lack of justice and respect for people perceived as 'other', based on several factors. I shall explore the issue of justice more practically in the next chapter as I consider the strategies of the theology of hospitality.

Next to the issue of justice is the matter of peace as man's common moral concern in understanding the nature of the theology of hospitality. Seyyed has asserted that "there is no major religion that does not emphasize peace."⁹⁹² Further, Arinze says "peace has no religious frontiers"⁹⁹³ and "there is no separate Christian peace, Muslim peace, Hindu peace, Buddhist peace. Religions have no choice but to work together to promote peace."⁹⁹⁴ Peace, like justice, is rooted in the three main religious traditions of Nigeria. The indigenous religions seek to experience cosmic equilibrium through their sacrificial systems. For Muslims, the Qur'an teaches that "God is the All-Peace who calls on the whole humankind in general and believers in particular to enter all wholly into peace."⁹⁹⁵ God, who is the creator of life, sharply condemns violence and the destruction of life, in spite of whatever may be the rhetoric supporting such actions. Also, instead of vendetta and physical assault, the Qur'an urges Muslims to repel wrongdoing with self-control and reconciliation. Doing so is said to be much rewarded in this world and highly rewarded in the world to come. Therefore, patience, self control and forgiveness are virtues stressed in the Qur'an⁹⁹⁶ and they show the significance of peace in the life of a Muslim.

The concept of peace for the Christian has profound backing from the Bible. Translated from the Hebrew *shalom*, peace is often viewed as possessing both a vertical and a horizontal dimension. Peace must begin with God, who also is the God of peace. God therefore is the 'ground' of peace; the "custodian and guarantor of all

⁹⁹² Seyyed, 215.

⁹⁹³ Arize, 57.

⁹⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁹⁵ Mohammed Fathi Osman, "God is the All-Peace, the Merciful" in ed. James Heft, *Beyond Violence: Religious Sources for Social Transformation in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, 59.

⁹⁹⁶ Ibid.

forms of peace. Ultimately, we have to call on God to guide us in the quest for peace at all levels”.⁹⁹⁷ But peace must also extend to all men and Arinze has argued that the world’s religions, with admirable unanimity, teach the Golden Rule: Love your neighbor as yourself (Matthew 22: 39), which leads to peace. According to Mugambi, *shalom* in the O.T “refers to the harmony which embraces the whole of human life at the levels of individual, family, community and nation”⁹⁹⁸. If peace is so all-embracing, then the Christian view of peace engages life holistically and there cannot be room for violence. Peace therefore is a means for attaining wholeness in the community and its compelling requirement on every Christian demands a theology of hospitality as such.

From the foregoing, I argue that the call for reflections on hospitality by the religions of Nigeria is a justified spiritual demand. Christians, Muslims and adherents of the indigenous religions can attest to the claim that the subject of hospitality is traceable to their scriptures and practices. Therefore, Christians and Muslims in Nigeria are called to show hospitality to each other, either as guests or hosts, as a major way of demonstrating their spirituality. In this way, religious conflicts and other kinds of discord will be in the path of decline and transformation.

Conclusion

In this chapter I began by stating that religion is both a source of conflict and a resource for peace but that attention is being devoted in recent times to the deployment of religion as an instrument for peace. Therefore, it is my view that the greatest treasure that religion can contribute to the transformation of conflict in Nigeria is theological. And based on Christian theology of an ethic of hospitality, emerging issues from my empirical studies, and the contributions of ecumenical bodies on inter-religious relationships, I recommended the need to pursue a theology of hospitality for Nigeria. I also stated that the sources of this theology are the Bible, Christian Tradition and religious pluralism. Since religious pluralism in this context includes the presence of indigenous religions, Islam and Christianity, insights were

⁹⁹⁷ J.N.K Mugambi, “The Christian Ideal of Peace and Political Reality in Africa”, in eds. Mar N. Getui and Peter Kanyandago *From Violence to Peace: A Challenge for African Christianity*, (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 2000), 79.

⁹⁹⁸ Ibid.,76.

drawn from the three religions on the subject of hospitality. Also, I reflected on the nature of the theology of hospitality and asserted that the belief in God, man's common origin in God, and man's common moral issues, namely, justice and peace, were crucial in comprehending the theology of hospitality in Nigeria.

Although the subject of hospitality by itself cannot present a comprehensive solution to religious conflicts in Nigeria, since they are based on complex factors, the theology of hospitality may call us back to the conviction that "God is always creating spaces for mutuality where we see only enmity and selfishness."⁹⁹⁹ This is quite vital for the attainment of peace in Nigeria. As presented above, the role of the theology of hospitality in engaging the religious conflict of Nigeria is spiritual and the Church must seek to understand, teach and practice it in its relationship with Muslims. It is hoped that such a theology of hospitality will make Nigeria more liveable, more peaceful and more reconciled. Some strategies to achieve these are the task of the next chapter.

⁹⁹⁹ John Koenig, *New Testament Hospitality*, 130.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THEOLOGY OF HOSPITALITY AS A STRATEGY FOR CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

Introduction

I mentioned in the previous chapter that the theology of hospitality offers the opportunity for both spirituality and strategy. Chapter six reflected more on the spirituality of the theology of hospitality as a necessary approach towards the transformation of relationships in Nigeria's pluralistic context. In this chapter, I argue that if the theology of hospitality will be useful in Nigeria, it must strategically address both the immediate and deeper patterns of conflict. That means hospitality is as much a strategic activity as it is a spiritual reality. In doing this I hope to fulfil the aspirations of practical theology on the one hand and the desires of conflict transformation, according to Lederach, on the other. In practical theology, issues oscillate from the level of praxis to theory and back to praxis. Polling and Miller argue that in order to test the suitability and the applicability of one's speculations, practical theology "must land in concrete experience...Refusal to return to experience leaves one's ideas floating in thin air where they may have striking coherence and clarity, but they may be irrelevant to real life".¹⁰⁰⁰ Therefore, the schemes which are mentioned in this chapter are meant to take us back to the field of religious conflict in Nigeria. When theological reflections are used to advance responses to dilemmas of life in such a way that life can be lived more meaningfully, then the task of correlation is realized.

In this thesis, I explored religious conflicts in Nigeria in order to determine the context of our theory. Following that, I suggested a theology of hospitality for the transformation of these religious conflicts. What remains is to provide cardinal 'guidelines', which I here refer to as 'strategies,' to be taken back into the conflict context for the purpose of conflict transformation. According to Lederach, transformation must target the 'episode' (immediate issues) and the 'epicentre'

¹⁰⁰⁰ James N. Polling and Donald Miller, *Foundations for Practical Theology of Ministry* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985), 93.

(deeper roots) of conflict in order to envision the desired pattern of change for the future. Following that framework, in chapter four, I presented the immediate (presenting) problems of the conflicts as reported by respondents in Jos and Maiduguri. The empirical data from these investigations brought up issues which need to be addressed in the first segment of this chapter. Further, in chapter five, I considered the roots of religious conflict in Nigeria so that the broader context of the conflicts might lead us into envisioning the desired future. Issues of the desired future are therefore integral to our strategy for conflict transformation through the theology of hospitality. In chapter six, I reflected on the sources and the nature of the suggested theology of hospitality for conflict transformation in Nigeria. Consequently, this chapter focuses on two strategic aspects of the theology of hospitality. First, I shall consider how the theology of hospitality confronts the immediate issues emerging from the religious conflicts which were investigated in Jos and Maiduguri. Second, I shall explore how the theology of hospitality can be a strategy for long-term conflict transformation in Nigeria.

Before exploring the strategies of the theology of hospitality, it is necessary to note the progression in the time frame within which the different stages of transformation occur. For instance, there is a distinction between the time necessary for humanitarian assistance and the one adequate for the enduring tasks of peacebuilding. For whilst in most cases, the management of humanitarian crisis call for rapid response to address the immediate survival needs of a population of conflict, issues of rehabilitation, reconstruction and development are long-term goals. In practical terms therefore, conflict transformation requires recognizing and taking concrete actions on both immediate (short-term) needs for disaster management and longer-term needs of constructive transformation of conflict.¹⁰⁰¹ It is not either or, but both and, which explains why conflict transformation is not in opposition to conflict management or conflict resolution efforts. It only strives to go beyond them in peace building and the Church is summoned to be practically involved in all stages.

¹⁰⁰¹ John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace Building Peace, Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington: United States Institute for Peace Press, 1997), 74-75.

Short Term Strategies for Handling Religious Conflict in Nigeria

Although the two conflicts studied in Northern Nigeria have both similarities and differences, they avail themselves to certain common strategies for intervention and transformation. As earlier stated, the Jos conflict was immediately caused by internal factors between Muslims and Christians while the Maiduguri conflict largely involved an 'external' cause, namely, the controversial Danish Cartoon. The conflicts led to loss of lives, destruction of property, displacement of people, and broken relationship between Muslims and Christians. Also, they brought about the resettlement of people along religious divides, economic hardship, fears, distrust and suspicion. There was moral deprivation due to increase in crime, stealing, killing, rape, consumption of drugs, destruction of families and communities. In view of these negativities of the conflicts, several rapid responses were necessary, some of which have taken place. Others are yet to be implemented.

It is important to mention the role of government, community leaders, traditional rulers, religious leaders and NGOs in the immediate management of the crises in various ways. Without their collective involvement, the conflicts would have been much more disastrous, to say the least. Quite notably, in both conflicts, it took the action of government security agents to arrest the situations. And although the security agents were blamed in both conflict sites for responding late, they eventually were the ones who quelled the violence. Much has already been said on this and of course there is hardly any argument against the legitimate use of force by government agencies to manage conflict when there is a breakdown of law and order. The intervention of government security agents leads to the disarmament of warring parties and the cessation of physical violence. However, response by force is often criticized, not only due to delay, but in view of the misuse of power by the law enforcement agents. It is also often a one-off action in the process of transforming conflict, therefore, other immediate actions in the path of lasting peace must be pursued. Without being exhaustive, the following short-term strategies are needed for handling religious conflict in Nigeria within the context of hospitality and it is part of the Church's pastoral responsibilities to be so involved in the society.

1. Relief for Victims

Since hospitality has been described as welcoming one another, especially between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria, a theology of hospitality will certainly involve caring for the victims of conflict. While other matters of conflict are very important, like ensuring that the perpetrators of violence are arrested, the need to focus attention first on the victims of conflict should be foremost for the Church and there are several reasons for this. Apart from the possibility of a victim becoming a victimizer someday, if left unattended, the immediate needs of victims are usually enormous. Victims in the religious conflicts of Nigeria include women who became widows, orphans and persons who witnessed the brutal killing of members of their families. For instance, as stated in chapter four, a family in Maiduguri lost six children within a few hours of the conflict. Such families would need the hospitality of the Church to ensure that immediate pains were assuaged. Also, people whose homes and businesses were destroyed by looting and fire would need immediate relief while people who suffered injuries of various kinds deserved access to immediate medical treatment. The steps to be taken in such situations are enormous as they would be determined by the various needs. For instance, the need for food, water and temporary shelter were quite obvious for people displaced from various parts of Jos. Also, as reported by one respondent in Tudun Wada, an injury that he incurred during the 2004 conflict had remained unhealed as at the time of the interview. For such persons, relief must include more than food and temporary shelter.

2. Healing of Traumas and Forgiveness

A theology of hospitality will take seriously the need for traumas resulting from conflict to be healed. Victims of violence need to be healed of trauma.¹⁰⁰² A respondent in Jos reported how a child in his house was always frightened at the sight of a crowd, after the conflict. In like manner, many people in the conflict sites were found to still be living in bitterness and fear. With the loss of relations and means of livelihood, many were still traumatized by the conflicts and they

¹⁰⁰² Carroll Houle, "Empowering the Victims", in Mary N. Getui and Peter Kanyandago eds. *From Violence to Peace: A Challenge for African Christianity*, (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 2000), 172.

found it hard to forgive the people of the 'other' religion. This was not unexpected since family bread winners and young men who were hopes of their families had been killed. Robert Schreiter has argued that it matters not how tenaciously one holds to the hope of a better future; such hopes would become shattered as long as the horrors of the past are still harboured in the mind. Thus he maintained that it is pertinent to come to grips with the past:

Without some measure of coming to terms with the past, the unhealed wounds will continue to fester, poisoning whatever new society is constructed, and poisoning the risk of victims themselves turning into the oppressors of others.¹⁰⁰³

It could be argued that one of the factors leading to the reoccurrence of various conflicts in Nigeria is the issue of unhealed wounds in the hearts of people, especially children and young stars.

Arinze has specially called on religions to bring along the 'balm of Healing' in approaching the question of physical violence. He argued that violence leads to wounds in individuals, communities and nations, which could be inflicted physically, morally and psychologically, and leading to confusion, anxieties and fears. He held that these conditions of the hearts of people must be healed as aided by religion.¹⁰⁰⁴ He argued that for Christians, the greatest wound inflicted on people is sin.

And sin is primarily an offence against God. It is often also an offence against one's neighbour. Jesus Christ, through His life, suffering, death, and resurrection, has redeemed humanity from the wound of sin and brought it healing. He has entrusted to His Church the dispensation of his ministry and his Gospel of healing and salvation...Other religions can articulate how they understand the role of religion in bringing healing.¹⁰⁰⁵

In other words, since Christianity teaches that Christ came to heal mankind of sin, the Church is expected to carry on the healing ministry of Jesus in the lives of traumatized victims of conflict, irrespective of their race or religion.

Healing of trauma could be in various ways, depending on the severity of the situation. Also, all categories of a population of conflict may be involved, as

¹⁰⁰³ Robert Schreiter, "The Theology of Reconciliation and Peacemaking for Mission, in Howard Mellor and Timothy Yates eds. *Mission, Violence and Reconciliation*, Sheffield, Cliff College Publishing, 2003, 19.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Francis Cardinal Arinze, *Religions for Peace: A Call for Solidarity to the Religions of the World*, (Darton: Longman and Todd Ltd., 2002), 64.

¹⁰⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 65.

men, women, youths and children. This may include one victim sharing his/her experience with other victims or friends or in a sympathetic group; involving professional counsellors or psychotherapists and getting comprehensive rehabilitation programme from trauma handling clinics. It is quite important that for the healing of trauma, there must always be a relevant sympathetic group to listen to the account being told. As people share their vulnerability with one another, they experience joint transformation.¹⁰⁰⁶ Christian and Muslim groups can organize such story-telling avenues either separately or together, in a spirit of hospitality through dialogue with one another. According to Arinze, “No matter how difficult the effort at healing of historical memories may be, religions owe it to humanity to engage in this together in order to build a just and lasting peace. [Therefore] to accept the past is a condition for realistically facing the future.”¹⁰⁰⁷

Schreiter has emphasized the significance of truth telling as a means of bringing healing to the past. He contends that things kept in hiding during conflict must be told. This surely breaks through the wall of silence slammed upon the society and counters the falsehood of wrongdoers who try to legitimize their wrongdoing. By so doing, those who have been wrongly accused are exonerated and seen in a different light by the society.¹⁰⁰⁸ That in itself has a major part to play in healing past wounds. There is therefore a supreme importance to truth seeking and truth speaking in the healing of past wounds, even when the truth is bitter to swallow, full of pain, uneasy to relate and uncomfortable to process.¹⁰⁰⁹

Truth telling is also very cardinal to the issues of forgiveness and reconciliation. “Reconciliation requires that the victimizer recognizes the wrong that s/he has done to the victim.”¹⁰¹⁰ There cannot be true healing of the mind if there is no forgiveness. Truth telling therefore calls for accepting that one is wrong, saying

¹⁰⁰⁶ Houle, 172-3.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Arinze, 84.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Schreiter, 20.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Arinze, 84.

¹⁰¹⁰ Peter Kanyandago, “Violence in Africa: A Search for Causes and Remedies” in Mary N. Getui and Peter Kanyandago eds. *From Violence to Peace: A Challenge for African Christianity*, (Nairobi: Action Publishers, 2000), 32

words of apology and asking for pardon. We cannot pretend that this is an easy exercise as it demands the participation of both victim and victimizer, where it is possible to do so. Through truth telling, the perpetrator of violence asks for forgiveness and the victim offers the forgiveness. “If the victim cannot forgive, he or she can be a prisoner of fear and hate...Victims who forgive free themselves from the oppressor and reconnect themselves with the larger community.”¹⁰¹¹ Therefore, forgiveness is of mutual benefit both to the victimizer and the victim. It helps the victimizer to come to terms with his/her evil actions; accept them and renounce them. As for the victim, forgiving the perpetrator of evil ensures a balanced state of mind which comes from the release of such persons from the heart. “Time and prayer may be needed if one has been raped, beaten badly, seen one’s family killed and so on.”¹⁰¹²

While it is impossible to know all the individuals who perpetrated the religious violence in Jos and Maiduguri, on institutional level, there is a lot that can be done. There is need for apology for the damage done in the name of religion by both Christians and Muslims in the various populations of conflict. This could be done openly during significant national events by responsible religious leaders.¹⁰¹³ Incisively, we note that both the Bible and the Qur’an teach the centrality of forgiveness. Jesus taught His followers to ask God the Father for forgiveness in the measure of forgiveness that they have given to others (Matthew 6: 12). He adds: “For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins (Matt 6: 14-15 -NIV). In chapter six we made reference to the call of Jesus on His disciples to love their enemies and pray for those who persecute them, striving to be perfect as their heavenly Father is perfect (Matt 5:43-48). On the cross, Jesus demonstrated what He had taught His disciples when He prayed for those who crucified Him: “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing” (Luke 23:34- NIV).

¹⁰¹¹ Houle, 174.

¹⁰¹² Ibid., 174-175.

¹⁰¹³ Kanyandago, 33.

Also, the Qur'an calls on Muslims to forgive those who wrong them. It emphasizes that the bid to put an end to tyranny should not become another means of tyranny. Qur'an 42:40 says: "And [an attempt at] requiting evil may, too, become an evil; hence, whoever pardons and makes peace, his reward rests with God; for verily, He does not love evildoers". This promises reward for whoever pardons and makes peace. David Herbert recalls Abu Nimer's interpretation of the passage to mean – "Although the use of force is prescribed in the Qur'an under specific and strict conditions, nevertheless, Islamic values systematically give higher ground to forgiveness than to revenge or violence."¹⁰¹⁴ It is therefore important to remind Christians and Muslims in Nigeria of the need to learn and practice self-criticism within their patrimonies and in dialogue with each other. Asking and giving pardon is a sign of humility and a willingness to be reconciled and to live in harmony. As far as our empirical investigation and literature have shown, occasions for asking and receiving forgiveness have not been publicly acknowledged either in Jos or Maiduguri. Arinze states:

The ability to repent and ask for forgiveness is not a sign of weakness but rather of moral strength. An individual should not presume that he or she is never wrong. And a religion should not start from the premise that all its followers have always lived up to the highest demands of its ideals.¹⁰¹⁵

Healing of memories and offering of forgiveness do not imply the total eradication of past memories. It is not as simple as the 'forgive-and-forget' rhetoric. The reality is that it may not be possible to erase memories of the past. However, the processes of healing and forgiveness enables the victim of violence to deal with the past in such a way that bitterness is removed and the past ceases to govern one's life.¹⁰¹⁶ Schreiter said:

Forgiveness is not forgetting; it is rather remembering in a different way. One is no longer controlled by the past event or the perpetrator. One is able to see the perpetrator from a different perspective that does not allow the perpetrator to retain control over the victim...In forgiveness the victim seeks the redemption of the perpetrator. It recognizes the human dignity of the perpetrator, however deeply twisted and flawed.¹⁰¹⁷

¹⁰¹⁴ Herbert, 43.

¹⁰¹⁵ Arinze, 85.

¹⁰¹⁶ Schreiter, 22.

¹⁰¹⁷ Ibid.

This can only happen in a committed spirit of hospitality which the Church is called to embrace. By this, the Church will appropriate its identity and fulfill its pastoral ministry in Nigeria. However, not only should the Church initiate and champion such healing processes, it may be required to partner with other efforts in achieving this.

3. The Pursuit of Justice

The issue of justice is integral to a theology of hospitality and crucial in both the short and long term strategies for conflict transformation. If Muslims and Christians will receive one another in a spirit of hospitality, according to the teaching of their faiths, then they must take seriously the issue of being fair to one another in the pursuit of enduring relationships. As earlier mentioned, hospitality is possible only where there is peace and peace itself is sustained by justice. In this section, we shall concern ourselves only with the issues of justice which are cardinal to short-term conflict handling. They are necessary for initiating serious movement in the path of conflict transformation.

In this section, I have adopted Schreiter's understanding of justice as 'punitive', 'restorative' and 'structural'¹⁰¹⁸ as types of justice to be pursued in Nigeria. This restriction has been done in view of the fact that the notion of justice is broad and complex. In spite of this, Schreiter's insights are relevant to the pursuit of justice within our suggested theology of hospitality. In short-term conflict handling, only punitive and restorative justices are central, in my view. Structural justice, on the other hand, belongs to the long-term strategies of conflict transformation, which I shall discuss later. Schreiter begins his discussion of justice as a follow-up to the matter of truth telling. He opined that truth telling is not just to be done for the sake of doing so. Rather, truth telling should serve as a precondition for justice and justice should assist in healing the society's traumas. It should also help the society shape a lifestyle pattern.¹⁰¹⁹

First, our theology of hospitality must accept the important role of punitive justice which "entails legitimate authority ascertaining wrongdoing and then punishing those

¹⁰¹⁸ Ibid., 21.

¹⁰¹⁹ Ibid., 20.

responsible for it.”¹⁰²⁰ I argue here that it is necessary to uphold punitive justice in Nigeria’s religious conflicts because criminal offences which are not acceptable in the society such as killing, destruction of property, looting, rape and other forms of violation of human persons must be addressed. The issue of impunity is alarming in the matters of religious conflict in Nigeria as perpetrators of such violence remain untouched by the law. And even when a few people are arrested, they may not be the ones behind the killings and destructions. Repeatedly, suspects arrested are released without being punished. Punitive justice will therefore be relevant and important in handling religious violence in Nigeria. The law must not look away from behaviours which are against the norms of healthy societal living. Such behaviours are against the principles of hospitality. I concur here with Szablowinski who argues that when punitive justice is not pursued, “the offenders usually keep hurting others and the violence is prolonged”.¹⁰²¹

But punitive justice has its limitations in many ways. Here we shall mention only two. One, excessive harshness with the victimizer may be another form of victimization and the attempt to pursue justice can become another form of injustice.¹⁰²² Two, since religious conflicts are usually carried out through mob action, only a few persons can and may be arrested, who, as we said above, may not be the main culprits. In punitive justice therefore, many victimizers often escape justice. Yet it is essential for key perpetrators of violence to be brought to book in order to establish the practice as a system in the society and to bring deterrence in the future. When people know that they will be arrested and punished, they are bound to have a second thought before engaging in violent actions or masterminding one. An excerpt from a publication by CAN in Borno State to the *Administrative Committee of Inquiry* after the conflict at Maiduguri states: “Those who destroyed lives, places of worship, businesses, houses and properties have questions to answer...It is

¹⁰²⁰ Ibid., 21. Punitive justice has the same idea as retributive justice. It is a theory of justice that affirms that in response to crime, it is morally acceptable to administer proportionate punishment.

¹⁰²¹ Zenon Szablowinski, “Punitive Justice and Restorative Justice as Social Reconciliation”, *The Heythrop Journal*, 49(3): 2008, 405.

¹⁰²² Ibid.

necessary that they are fished out of the society and punished as deterrents to others.”¹⁰²³

To “fish out” perpetrators of violence from the society may be difficult, but not impossible, by the relevant government agencies. Nigeria as a nation cannot continue to enjoy harmonious living and development, as long as perpetration of religious violence is treated with impunity. This is a challenge to all Nigerians which must be championed by Christians and Muslims alike in as much as impunity is contrary to religious norms. Also, the indigenous African systems which we spoke about in chapter two have no room for impunity. Although cosmic equilibrium has been said to be the aim in resolving conflicts, indigenous systems place penalties and fines on persons adjudged by the elders to be perpetrators of evil. That principle has no option if there will be sustained harmony in a society characterized by complexities and diversities like Nigeria.

Second, our theology of hospitality must accept the important role of restorative justice. This also belongs to the category of the short-term strategies for conflict transformation in Nigeria. Restorative justice involves actions and gestures which aim to heal the wounds caused by religious conflict and to establish lasting peace. In explaining restorative justice, Schreiter says: “To the extent possible, whatever has been stolen must be returned and those who have suffered loss must be given some compensation to aid them in the times ahead.”¹⁰²⁴ Restorative justice has also been defined as “any of several forms of justice that attempts to repair the harm done to the victim, sometimes by making the offender make restitution”.¹⁰²⁵ Although the enormity of the losses in Nigeria’s religious conflicts can never be fully compensated, something should be done to the victims of religious conflict ‘to the extent possible’ and the Church must be steeped in ensuring this.¹⁰²⁶ The Church in

¹⁰²³ CAN Publication, “Memorandum by Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) on the Maiduguri Civil Disturbance of 18th Februry, 2006 to the High Powered Administrative Committee of Inquiry, n.d., 9.

¹⁰²⁴ Schreiter, 21.

¹⁰²⁵ en.wiktionary.org/wiki/restorative_justice

¹⁰²⁶ It is in this principle of restorative justice that several voices have been calling for the reparation of objects looted from Africa by the West through colonization and stored in major museums in Europe. See Peter Kanyandago eds. *From Violence to Peace: A Challenge for African Christianity*, (Nairobi: Action Publishers, 2000), 33.

Nigeria must be seen to be the voice of the victims to ensure that compensation is made through government to sufferers of all kinds of violence like in Jos and Maiduguri. Schreiter has argued that: “Forgiving the perpetrator need not entail not punishing the perpetrator or exacting restitution.”¹⁰²⁷ As mentioned above, punishment must be included in the intervention processes of religious conflict in Nigeria. But because punishment of the victimizer often leaves the victim helpless, necessary steps must be developed to pursue justice in the favour of the victim. Ways must be sought to tangibly meet the needs of the victims of conflict in order that life may be restored to persons ebbing out of meaningful existence as consequence of conflict. This must become part of the pastoral ministry of the Church in Nigeria and the Church can appeal to government to do the same.

Restitution and compensation can enhance healing and forgiveness. For instance, during a religious conflict in Dutse, Jigawa State, in which Christians were attacked and Churches were destroyed (as mentioned by a respondent in Maiduguri), the compensation of the Christians by the state government for the reconstruction of their destroyed Church buildings greatly assisted in the healing of the wounds of that conflict. That shows the efficacy of compensation, reparation and restitution, within the purview of seeking forgiveness and reconciliation. And although it was funds from the State which was used for the compensation rather than funds extracted directly from the perpetrators (since another form of restorative justice demands the reparation from the victimizers directly), the fact is that the action of government enhanced the desired reconciliation. For, once a conflict assumes intensity such that mob action is involved; only government compensation appears feasible in Nigeria. It means that the government in Nigeria has a lot to do by way of compensation. As at the time of investigation, wreckages of buildings, vehicles, businesses and places of worship, covered the conflict sites. While some concern was seen to be shown towards the reconstruction of the Jos Ultra Modern market, the story was not the same about the places of worship, homes and businesses destroyed in Jos and Maiduguri.¹⁰²⁸ Again, while a few responses from government and NGOs helped to

¹⁰²⁷ Schreiter, 22.

¹⁰²⁸ See appendix for pictures.

alleviate initial suffering, in most cases, victims of the disasters have been left to nurse their wounds themselves as individuals, families and religious institutions. Addressing these situations by the Church and the government is of great importance to the transformation of conflict in Nigeria.

Long Term Strategies for Handling Religious Conflict in Nigeria

Our theology of hospitality also calls for certain long-term strategies for the transformation of religious conflict in Nigeria in order to have a desired future of peace and harmony. There are a number of reasons for this. First, it is the long-term strategies which can transform the deep roots of conflict. Short-term strategies are usually utilized in order to ensure that there is immediate cessation of violence and basic needs of victims and victimizers are met. They normally do not go beyond engaging the “immediate” causes of conflict and hardly ever delve into the deep roots of conflicts. As such, both the punitive and the restorative justices, including acknowledging injustice done, asking for forgiveness, handling trauma, and giving compensation; even though very useful, cannot be sufficient to bring lasting peace and reconciliation. However, they are an indispensable starting point for conflict transformation. Second, many times interveners in conflict cannot sustain their presence and initial activities beyond certain points. Hence government soon redeploys law enforcement agents from populations of conflict and the supply of relief materials by NGOs are discontinued as they run out of funds. These can lead to the resurgence of conflict. Third, long-term strategies often involve careful planning, thorough social analysis, reorientation, and structural changes which may include progressive procedures, finances, skilful leadership and a long period for implementation. In summary, long-term strategies are more difficult and more challenging than short-term strategies, but their effects are more guaranteeing of the desired change for the future through “a newness of relationships”.¹⁰²⁹ The Church is called to be involved in participating fully in ensuring that these long term strategies are implemented.

¹⁰²⁹ Cecelia Clegg, “From Violence to Peace: Reflections from Northern Ireland” in Howard Mellor and Timothy Yates eds. *Mission, Violence and Reconciliation*, Sheffield, Cliff College Publishing, 2003, 71.

In chapter five, we mentioned some of the roots of religious conflict in Nigeria to include the issues of religious plurality as manifested in the issues of Sharia, OIC, religious revitalization, Pentecostalism; ethnicity, politics, economy, and international politics. Engaging these issues is a necessity for the transformation of conflict in Nigeria. I argue that it is in the spirit of hospitality that this may be achieved and below are a few issues of grave concern which the long-term strategies for conflict transformation in Nigeria must entail.

1. Structural justice

Explaining structural justice, Schreiter says:

This involves changing a legal code, the judiciary system and engaging in such acts as land redistribution, guaranteeing the rights of minority populations, and providing public services such as access to education, health, safety and employment. This final kind of justice is part of the long work of reconstruction. It is in many ways the most difficult, but usually the most necessary.¹⁰³⁰

There is no doubt that any meaningful attempt to transform conflict in Nigeria must go the painful way of bringing changes to certain structural aspects of the nation state. For instance, in Jos, politics of inclusion and exclusion for access to power between state indigenes and settlers was part of what resulted into the clash between Muslims and Christians. As already mentioned, the Hausa-Fulani settlers of Jos are asking for rights to power. At the same time, the indigenes of Jos are arguing that in other states in the country, settlers do not have such rights to power. Thus both the indigenes and the Hausa-Fulani are crying out for justice. Complicating this, there are other settlers in Jos who are not Hausa-Fulani and who are not asking for such right to power. This settler/indigene situation needs to be constitutionally resolved in such a way that there will be fairness to all citizens, wherever they live in the country. Within our theology of hospitality, there must be laws to guarantee the rights of both guests and hosts and how guests can become hosts, all over the country. According to Polling and Miller, a just community would ensure that all persons participate in defining its character and that all people have access to resources to promote meaningful life. Its leaders must be responsive to the whole community¹⁰³¹ and it would be appropriate that the Church pursues this goal. But

¹⁰³⁰ Schreiter, 21.

¹⁰³¹ Polling and Miller, 140.

because this requires serious and comprehensive social analysis, sufficient time must be given to ensure that there is fairness to every citizen. This structural change can be prompted by a spirit of hospitality and achieving it has hopes for increased unity in the country. As it is now, if one's ancestors do not come from a particular state in the country, one is denied rights in that state even if one was born there and this affects the issues of gaining access to amenities and power. According to Kristeva, France faced a similar situation about its nationality in the event of the influx of migrants and 'foreigners'. Through the 'Committee on Nationality' which was set up, foreigners who had settled on a long-term basis in France were granted French nationality through certain prescribed modalities. By the end of the twentieth century, France began to welcome newcomers in a new way and to call on all people to live together as a single nation.¹⁰³² Nigeria has to put in place its own system of welcoming one another without giving up particularities. It has to prescribe ways, guaranteed by law, on how settlers would have a number of rights and indicate "political duties specific to natives"¹⁰³³ as it was the case in France.

There are other constitutional matters that must be addressed in Nigeria in order to experience the hospitality that will guarantee peace in the country. For instance, the sharia and the OIC issues which have been left unresolved are likely to ignite religious contestations, and this must be avoided. The government must not shy away from these issues, which have led to serious cases of unrest and loss of lives in the country. And yet in these matters, there is also the need for very careful analysis of the subjects which must take into consideration issues of fairness and equity towards all Nigerians.

Again, structural justice includes providing education to people in Nigeria. In this regard, education has to include both formal and religious education. Formal education is able to transform the society from its level of illiteracy to an appreciable level of awareness. People without education are easily manipulated by the educated elites for their selfish interests. The majority of those who execute religious crisis are semi-literate persons, usually idlers who are tipped with meagre rewards. The *almajiri* boys who were prominent in the Maiduguri crisis belong to this category.

¹⁰³² Julia Kristeva, *Strangers to Ourselves* translated by Leon S. Roudiez (New york: Columbia University Press, 1991), 194 -195.

¹⁰³³ Ibid., 195.

The argument here is that if a person is literate, it may be difficult for his/her mind to be easily manipulated. However, we know that providing education is not an easy task for government and it will take serious planning, professionalism and budget, to be able to reduce the illiteracy level of the country. This process belongs to the long-term strategies for transforming conflict in which the Church must continue to participate with government. But because it has already begun, and in some parts of the country, the educational provisions of government have not been adequately utilized, it is the duty of the government and the religious organizations to encourage their followers to embrace formal education.

Further, the educational needs of the country must also be in the area of religion. It is important that each religion teaches its followers about the enormous resources for peace which are embedded in each tradition and seek to teach believers about the faith of others. This avenue has not been explored enough in Nigeria. While, as mentioned in chapter six, PROCUMRA has tried to educate Christians about Islam in Africa, much of the learning processes have not been at the grassroots level. Rather they have remained on the elitist level and at the disposal of the few. Also, NIREC has not reached the grassroots and its programme of dialogue remains promissory.

The problem of unemployment in Nigeria must be taken very seriously if structural justice will be done. Going around Jos and Maiduguri substantiated the huge amount of unemployment in Nigeria. In both cities, the obvious obnoxious idling and loitering around of able-bodied men on the streets was either associated with the cause of the conflicts or seen as a strategy for avoiding conflicts in the future. The question asked was: "What, in your opinion, ought to have been done to avoid the conflict?" Or, as it sometimes was twisted: "How can future conflicts be discouraged?" One respondent in Jos said:

People need economic justice. The government should empower the indigenes to be productive. People should be given bank loans and private organizations should create job opportunities. When people have something to do, they will not have time for violence.¹⁰³⁴

Therefore, economic policies which will guarantee sustainable empowerment and development of all Nigerians must be put in place. There must be a very serious

¹⁰³⁴ Interview with Mohammed Hashir Sa'id, Jos, 19/2/07.

commitment to poverty alleviation and the resources of the nation must enjoy equitable distribution without any group being left out. Among many issues that easily cause grievances in societies are unemployment, discrimination, exclusion from the political process, and social injustice¹⁰³⁵ and engaging them practically is also part of the pastoral ministry of the Church.

2. Moral Reconstruction of Society

Our theology of hospitality offers enormous grounds for the moral reconstruction of Nigerian society. I have spoken of the issues of rape, stealing, killing, destruction of property, hatred of the ‘other’, greed, drugs and several other vices which amount to sinful acts which are condemned by religion. These are destructive practices which affect the society and unless people are willing to give up these things, one cannot be talking about stability and development in the country. Therefore, individuals, families, schools, and religious institutions, must consciously make the effort to change and reverse this generational pattern. Moral reconstruction after a time of violence involves “helping rebuild a society so that the evils of the past cannot be repeated”.¹⁰³⁶

Since an outcome to every conflict is finding ways of moving on into the future, decisions usually include matters of norms, values and morals. The religious institutions have an ample opportunity to make contributions into the policies which will positively influence the moral life of the Nigerian society. And although Christians and Muslims will differently interpret certain issues of values and norms, there certainly are several avenues of convergence. Hence, through dialogue, the religious institutions must assist in ensuring policies which will preserve the dignity of life, respect for every Nigerian, support for the suffering, assistance for the sick, and fairness to all people in all forms of access to power in the nation. Because this will take a lot of focus, commitment, and time, the religious institutions are required to integrate it into their systems of operation at a level of priority. The Church is expected to champion this cause.

¹⁰³⁵ Keith Ward, *Is Religion Dangerous?* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2006), 63.

Religious Leaders as Resources in a Theology of Hospitality

If our theology of hospitality will be a useful approach to conflict transformation, then the role of religious leaders as ‘resources’ to ensure its actualization and success must be essential. This is in accordance with Lederach’s approach to conflict transformation which emphasises empowering and maximizing the ‘resources’ for conflict transformation from within the population of conflict. Lederach suggests that in order to achieve sustained reconciliation, there must be focus on the endeavours of multiple actors and activities, but with more prominence on actors ‘within’. As already noted, his three-level “pyramid of Peacebuilding” (top, middle, grassroots) asserts that the middle-level leaders, among whom are the religious leaders,¹⁰³⁷ are the “‘hinge’ group who can make known the plight of the mass population to the leaders, and who can interpret back to the masses the treaties and agreements worked out by the elite.”¹⁰³⁸ He said “the middle-range contains a set of leaders with a determinant location in the conflict who, if integrated properly, might provide the key to creating an infrastructure for achieving and sustaining peace.”¹⁰³⁹ Therefore, for both short and long-term strategies of conflict transformation, the role of religious leaders must not be underestimated in Nigeria because they are in the position to provide the needed leadership towards peace building. Their influence upon the society is quite enormous as they are able to network between the top and the grassroots levels of leadership within populations of conflict.¹⁰⁴⁰

Religious leaders have the unequalled frequency and consistency of meeting with their followers. The avenue to preach peace, love compassion, mercy and other components of hospitality, as God’s desire for man, is enormous. And because the institutions of their practice, namely, the Church and the Mosque, are already established, they have the advantage of great influence on the people. Again, because these institutions belong to ecumenical bodies which are emphasizing the same

¹⁰³⁶ Schreiter, 23.

¹⁰³⁷ John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, (Washington, DC, United States Institute of Peace Press, 2004), 39.

¹⁰³⁸ Robert Schreiter, “Preparing Missionaries to be Agents of Reconciliation and Peacemaking” in *Mission, Violence and Reconciliation*, 52.

¹⁰³⁹ Lederach, *Building Peace*, 46.

¹⁰⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 42.

issues of peace and reconciliation, they possess assured potency to influence their members. For instance, Christian leaders in Nigeria have a lot to draw from the happenings in the AACC and the WCC, as already mentioned, to emphasize the need for a better relationship with Muslims. There is also no doubt that some resources of their faith, mainly their Scriptures (Bible and Qur'an), are inexhaustible repertoires from which to fetch out teachings on the values of peace, justice and love. I therefore argue in this thesis that religious leaders have a major role to play in the effort towards sustainable peace in Nigeria. At the heart of my suggested strategies lies the conviction that religious leaders, through their various opportunities and spheres of influence, can and should help in transforming conflict. For instance, in the area of trauma healing which we discussed above, spiritual leaders possess tremendous ability to listen, offer counsel and prayer. As already noted, conflicts are sometimes perpetuated because people are not heard and it makes a great impact on a victim when the hearers include religious leaders. And to do this even better, they may themselves borrow skills from various programmes of mediation, despite the riches of their spiritual and patrimonial receptacles. But this is not all, Christian and Muslim religious leaders can and should offer themselves as instruments of joint 'problem solving' in situations of disharmony.

Most importantly, religious leaders will be expected to continue to pursue cordial relationships within their respective traditions as well as seek cordial relationships across traditions. That means that intra and inter religious dialogue must be embraced. If this middle-range leadership approach to conflict is explored and pursued, there is no doubt that Nigeria will be in great strides in the direction of peace and conflict transformation.

Social Action for Reconstruction

Although a few things which may be categorized as social actions have been dealt with under structural justice, I wish to recognize here the importance of joint social actions between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria in a spirit of hospitality. As earlier mentioned, when people come together in relationship, they must not be unconcerned about the common problems they are facing. Therefore, as Christians and Muslims welcome one another in Nigeria, they are expected to become partners

together in allaying problems that threaten their collective progress. Christian and Muslim leaders must guide their members in the path of joint efforts to alleviate suffering and to make room for better living. Christians and Muslims in the zones of conflict can work together as Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) in tackling the issues of drug abuse, security, illiteracy, health and other kinds of sufferings, an example being the issues of HIV-AIDS.¹⁰⁴¹ Many issues deserving social action lend themselves to inter-religious relations which can contribute to peace building in Nigeria and it will be part of religious obligations to confront them together. Lectures and talks given by religious leaders or resource persons at the behest of religious leaders can explore what each religion teaches about social needs and this will assist in revealing series of convergences in the two traditions. In this way hospitality is sustained and conflict is gradually transformed.

Let me stress here that the aim of the suggested theology of hospitality is to lead to the transformation of religious conflict in Nigeria. Although transforming conflict goes beyond 'managing' or 'resolving' conflict, it needs the approaches of both conflict management and conflict resolution, depending on the stage of transformation. For Nigeria's religious conflicts, the task of conflict transformation requires that the Church, through its leaders, gets practically involved in employing and pursuing both short-term and long-term strategies to address the immediate and root causes of conflict. To create a sustainable peaceful environment, the Church must continue to be the voice of the marginalized through positive action.

General Conclusion

So far, this thesis has been concerned about religious conflict and conflict transformation in Nigeria, a country characterized by ethnic, cultural and religious multiplicity. This diversity is itself in a state of continuous flux, resulting in numerous conflicts in the country, with religious conflict being at the apex, in my view. As shown in this thesis, religious conflict in Nigeria has become one of the greatest threats to the harmony, stability and development of the nation, demanding various approaches towards transformation. The current endeavour is a contribution

¹⁰⁴¹ Collaboration on the HIV/AIDS has begun, but it needs to spread.

to that effort based on John Paul Lederach's conceptual framework for conflict transformation and as part of the Church's pastoral ministry in a conflict ridden society.

The investigation focused on the religious conflicts that ensued in Jos and Maiduguri in Northern Nigeria, mainly involving Christians and Muslims. As such, field studies were carried out through semi-structured interviews and presented through the method of narrative analysis as assisted by the NVivo computer software to describe the lived experiences of the people. The study shows that what manifested as religious conflict, executed under Christian and Muslim identity groups, consisted of a complexity of factors. Although the religious factor was dominant, the diverse perspectives of my interviewees revealed other factors apart from which the conflicts could not be fully explained or understood. They include the socio-political, economic and ethnic factors. And although it has been argued that religion is seldom the *casus belli* of many struggles, once religion is involved in Nigeria, it takes the centre stage.¹⁰⁴² Again, even though it is contested that politicians characteristically stir up religious passion to achieve their political schema,¹⁰⁴³ and in my view, rightly so; I argue in this study that we must come to grips with the contention of Oliver McTernan that religion should not always be dismissed as a "proxy for some other cause", but to be "acknowledged as an actor in its own right"¹⁰⁴⁴. As such, the conflicts studied, while unsurprisingly complex, with both national and international underpinnings, portrayed a major role of religion. Also, this thesis considered the history of conflict studies, conflict theories and the various methods of conflict handling in Nigeria under the broad categories of violent and non-violent approaches. Of significance is the non-violent approach to conflict of the Inter-faith Mediation Centre in Kaduna, run by Imam Ashafa and Pastor Wuyep. In my view, the model illustrates the practical activity envisioned in a theology of hospitality.

¹⁰⁴² John Micklethwait, "In God's Name", *The Economist*, November 3, 2007, 10.

¹⁰⁴³ Ibid. See Yusuf Bala Usman, *The Manipulation of Religion in Nigeria*, Kaduna, Vanguard, 1987, 11-25. See also Jibrin Ibraheem's "Religion and Political Turbulence", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 29, 1, 1991, 127.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Oliver McTernan, *Violence in God's Name: Religion in an Age of Conflict* (London: Longman & Todd Ltd, 2003), xv.

The thesis also examined some of the ‘root causes’ of the conflicts as that is germane to the work of conflict transformation where every conflict serves as a window through which one sees the wider patterns or contexts. These sources of conflict are numerous, including the elements of Nigeria’s religious pluralism, the issues of Sharia, OIC, religious activism and Pentecostalism. Others are the legacy of colonialism, the politicisation of ethnicity; economic recession, and global matters of politics and religion.

I have argued in this thesis that amid the religious conflicts which pervade Nigeria, the religious institutions, particularly the Church, are called to play a key role in replacing adversarial behaviour with friendship. Theo Tschuy has contended that because religions are close to people involved in conflicts, Churches and other religious groups have a double duty in seeking peace.¹⁰⁴⁵ Accordingly he said: “There can be no peace among the nations without peace among religions. There can be no peace among the religions without dialogue between the religions. There can be no dialogue between the religions without research into theological foundations”.¹⁰⁴⁶ In other words, a significant contribution which the Church and other religious bodies can provide for conflict transformation is in the area of theological reflections. This thesis has therefore responded to this challenge by suggesting a theology of hospitality as a practical theological paradigm to engage the problem of religious conflict in Nigeria. Hospitality moves beyond tolerance to welcoming and appreciating the ‘other’. It relegates (passive) tolerance to a lower position and calls on the Church to lead the way in actively welcoming the ‘other’ in the manner of Jesus Christ. It challenges the Church to transcend differences and see unity even in the numerous diversities of Nigeria. I suppose that this call will not appear strange to Nigerians because in the midst of the religious crises, hospitality became an effective instrument for the preservation of lives. Gotam referred to hospitality as “true religion” when in the midst of barbaric hostilities in Jos in 2001, it was reported that some Muslims hid Christians against rioters and fed them for several days, and some Christians did the same for Muslims. He regretted that “these

¹⁰⁴⁵ Theo Tschuy, *Ethnic Conflict and Religion: Challenge to the Churches* (Geneva: WCC Publication, 1977), 147.

¹⁰⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 148.

brave and courageous peace makers hardly get any mention in a discussion of the crisis”.¹⁰⁴⁷ In this study, hospitality was epitomized in the responses of both Archbishop Kaigama and Sheikh Abba Aji who championed welcoming people of all religions to safety in Jos and Maiduguri during the conflicts. Therefore the idea of hospitality which was suggested in this thesis emerged from the field of research as a useful model for conflict transformation in Nigeria. And through the rich resources from culture, religious pluralism and Christian tradition, the theological reflections on hospitality were expounded. Thus, the paradigm of hospitality which emerged from the conflict situation and from Christian tradition provided the two-way street for Hitner’s correlation theology.

As mentioned in chapter three about practical theology, reflections usually lead to providing guidelines and specific plans for a particular community. It is argued that there must be a coming down from abstraction to the level of concrete in practical theology. This stage was reached in the first section of this chapter as a step-by-step strategy to ensuring the transformation of conflict. This synergized with Lederach’s approach to conflict transformation as adopted in this thesis. The guidelines were used to fashion out what Lederach terms as the realm of “the desired future” for conflict situation. Haight has warned that “if one cannot find an intrinsic bearing on human life within theological understanding itself, there is no reason to take it seriously.”¹⁰⁴⁸ Hence, the guidelines were given in order to translate the theology of hospitality from abstract into credible actions which engage the human negativities of religious conflict.

At this point, the word “towards” in our title deserves some clarification. Quite often, the expressions “towards” and “toward” are interchangeably used in academic discourses as prepositions and adjectives to imply movement in a direction.¹⁰⁴⁹ The *Chambers Dictionary* defines ‘towards’ as “in direction of; in relation or regard to

¹⁰⁴⁷ Gotam, “The Social Context”, 75.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Roger Haight, *Dynamics of Theology* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1990), 212.

¹⁰⁴⁹ <http://dictionary.reference.com/help/faq/language/d49.html>. It is observed that “toward” is preferred in American English while “towards” is the predominant form in British English. See also J.E. Metcalfe and C. Astle’s *Correct English*, (Tadworth: Clarion MCMXCV, 1880), 31.

...as a help or contribution to.”¹⁰⁵⁰ The aspects that interest me in this thesis are the phrases: “in direction of” and “as...contribution to”. Therefore, this thesis recognizes that the theology of hospitality which is here suggested from the perspective of practical theology is neither the final word on the issue nor does it preclude other theological approaches. But I argue that this approach offers new ways of handling religious conflict in Nigeria because it calls on the Church to be practically engaged in its pastoral duties towards the victims, victimizers and the entire population of conflict, whatever may be their religious persuasions. It challenges the Church to reflect on its relationship in Nigeria with the adherents of other religions, particularly Islam, in such a way that a spirit of hospitality will prevail. And if this is done by the Church as led by its leaders, it means that the category of middle-range leadership which is crucial to Lederach’s peace building model becomes central.

More importantly, because “towards” also means “as contribution to”, this thesis recognizes other conflict transformation efforts from other disciplines which are co-wayfarers in the direction of inter-religious harmony and national stability, secular or religious. In his discourse on the theology of religious pluralism, Dupuis suggests that the term ‘toward’ implies that proposed perspectives on the subject could not bring “definitive solutions” to all questions being asked.¹⁰⁵¹ In the same manner, this thesis assumes that no particular discipline can claim exclusiveness to perspectives on conflict transformation. And since conflict is an interdisciplinary subject, all hands are required to be on deck in the search for peace. “Towards” therefore implies that other conflict transformation approaches could be valid. For instance, I have argued that dialogue is one of the means of sustaining the theology of hospitality. And yet Ariarajah asserts that the call to dialogue does not imply the jettisoning of the law court when justice is at stake,¹⁰⁵² as mentioned above. Therefore, the theology of hospitality as recommended in this thesis does not preclude the involvement of other relevant and necessary approaches to conflict transformation. Rather, it partners with them and survives only inasmuch as other approaches are in

¹⁰⁵⁰ *The Chambers Dictionary*, 1998.

¹⁰⁵¹ Jacques Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1997), 11.

¹⁰⁵² *Ibid.*, 20-21.

effect. That means conflict management and conflict resolution are also crucial to the work of conflict transformation. The Church is not taking over the responsibilities of the state or displacing relevant NGOs; rather, they are all mutually involved in the search for unity, stability and development. Yet, I have argued here that the Church's opportunities are enormous since the religious domain consists of all strata of the Nigerian society which could be positively influenced. The theology of hospitality is therefore suggested as a gradual, practical and, in my view, effective method of transforming relationships between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria since it operates as spirituality and strategy.

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ORAL INTERVIEW TABLE

Key

File Label – J – Jos; M – Maiduguri; FGD – Focus Group Discussion

Place – Mai – Maiduguri – Jos for Jos

Rel – C – Christianity; I – Islam

Sex – M – Male; F – Female

Marital Status – M – Married; S – Single

Position – RL – Religious Leader

| INTERVIEWEE | File Label | Place | Rel | Sex | Marital Status | Position | Age | Int. Date |
|---|----------------------|--------------|------------|------------|-----------------------|-----------------|------------|------------------|
| <i>PATRICK D. KEVIN</i> | J 1 KEVIN | Jos | C | M | M | - | 48 | 10/1/07 |
| <i>EMMANUEL MAISAMARI</i> | J 2 MAISAM ARI | Jos | C | M | M | - | 31 | 14/2/ 07 |
| <i>MALLAM ISA SALIHU</i> | J 3 SALIHU | Jos | I | M | M | RL | 28 | 14/2/07 |
| <i>MRS FRANCES DALYOP</i> | J 4 DALYOP | Jos | C | F | M | - | 43 | 16/2/07 |
| <i>SHEIKH/IMAM ABDUL RAHIM MOHAMMED SANUSI</i> | J 5 SANUSI | Jos | I | M | M | RL | 51 | 16/2/07 |
| <i>SHEIKH ABDULRAHAM AN LAWAL ADAM MARSHI</i> | J 6 MARSHI | Jos | I | M | M | RL | 48 | 18/2/07 |
| <i>MALLAM MOHAMMED HASHIR SA'ID</i> | J 7 SA'ID | Jos | I | M | M | RL | 32 | 19/2/07 |
| <i>MOHAMMED SULEIMAN ADAMU</i> | J 8 ADAMU | Jos | I | M | M | RL | 48 | 20/2/07 |
| <i>REV. NATHAN NWACHUKWU</i> | J 9 NWACHU KWU | Jos | C | M | M | RL | 52 | 23/2/07 |
| <i>SISTER</i> | J 10 | Jos | C | F | S | RL | 50 | 22/3/07 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------|-----|---|---|---|------|----|---------|
| FLORENCE GOLAM | GOLAM | | | | | | | |
| SALE GARBA | J 11 FGD | Jos | I | M | M | - | 72 | 28/3/07 |
| SAFIA ADAMU | J 11 FGD | Jos | I | F | M | - | 65 | “ |
| MOHAMMED IBRAHIM | J 11 FGD | Jos | I | M | S | - | 28 | “ |
| SAMSON WILLY | J 11 FGD | Jos | C | M | S | - | 25 | “ |
| ELIAB KYARI | J 11 FGD | Jos | C | M | S | - | 22 | “ |
| ESTHER DANG | J 11 FGD | Jos | C | F | S | - | 26 | “ |
| DINATU SAMSON | J 11 FGD | Jos | C | F | M | - | 45 | “ |
| REV. MSHEILIA | M 1 | Mai | C | M | M | RL | 45 | 18/4/07 |
| THE SHEHU OF BORNO | M 2 | Mai | I | M | M | R/TL | 79 | 19/4/07 |
| REV JOSHUA RUWA ADAMU | M 3 | Mai | C | M | M | RL | 71 | 19/4/07 |
| MR. SIMON CHIA | M 4 | Mai | C | M | M | - | 52 | 19/4/07 |
| SHEIKH ABDULAH MOHAMMED | M 5 | Mai | I | M | M | RL | 62 | 20/4/07 |
| REV. ISHIRU GARBA | M 6 | Mai | C | M | M | RL | 49 | 21/4/07 |
| SHIKH ABBA AJI | M 7 | Mai | I | M | M | RL | 65 | 22/4/07 |
| PASTOR ENOCH ATYAYE | M 8 | Mai | C | M | M | RL | 49 | 22/4/07 |
| MALLAMA SAFIA AUWAL | M 9 | Mai | I | F | M | - | 34 | 22/4/07 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------|-----|---|---|---|---|----|---------|
| <i>HAJIYA RABI ADO</i> | M 10 | Mai | I | F | M | - | 27 | 25/4/07 |
| <i>UMARU MOHAMMED</i> | M 11 FGD | Mai | I | M | S | - | 23 | 27/4/07 |
| <i>CHIKA OBI</i> | M 11 FGD | Mai | C | F | S | - | 21 | “ |
| <i>MAIMUNA AHMED</i> | M 11 FGD | Mai | I | F | S | - | 19 | “ |
| <i>VICTORIA JOSEPH</i> | M 11 FGD | Mai | C | F | S | - | 25 | “ |
| <i>RAGINA MAAZI</i> | M 11 FGD | Mai | C | F | S | - | 26 | “ |
| <i>TIMOTHY ALAO</i> | M 11 FGD | Mai | C | M | S | - | 30 | “ |
| <i>CHIMEZIE OKAFOR</i> | M 11 FGD | Mai | C | M | S | - | 28 | “ |
| <i>LADI ALI</i> | M 11 FGD | Mai | I | F | M | - | 25 | |

Brief Profile of Jos Interviewees

- I. **MALLAM ISA SALIHU** (Student/tailor/ Assistant Chief Imam of Tudun Wada, Jos. He is 28 years old, married with two children)
- II. **SHEIKH ABDULRAHAMAN LAWAL ADAM MARSHI** (Chairman of Ulama of JNI, Jos North, Lecturer, Department of Religious Studies, University of Jos, Member, Council of Ulama and Elders, Plateau State; PhD student, University of Jos).
- III. **MALLAM MOHAMMED HASHIR SA'ID** (President of Muslim student Society of Nigeria, Plateau Unit; Chairman, JNI, youth wing, born 1968)
- IV. **MOHAMMED SULEIMAN ADAMU** (Director, Awareness for Education and development Initiatives; Cordinator of Albaya Islamic Secodary School, victim of crisis; born in Jos, age- 48 years, married with 13 children – holds a Master's degree)
- V. **SHEIKH/IMAM ABDUL RAHIM MOHAMMED SANUSI** (Imam of the Narudeen Society; 'Murshit of the Society (equivalent of missionary; stayed in jos since 1980; Member of the Ulama of Jos North; official of the JNI, Plateau State).
- VI. **EMMANUEL MAISAMARI** (From Jos, born in Jos, married, aged 31 years, living in Congo-Russia
- VII. **PATRICK D. KEVIN** (Christian, 48 years, married with children)
- VIII. **MRS FRANCES DALYOP** (Jos North LG staff – widow, 43 years)
- IX. **SISTER FLORENCE GOLAM** (Principal, St. Louise College, Jos for 17 years, 50 years)
- X. **REV NATHAN NWACHUKWU** (Acting Conference Secretary, Central Baptist Conference, Jos).

XI. FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION IN JOS

Sale Garba – 70+

Hama Adamu 70+

Mohammed Ibrahim – 55+

Samson Willy – 20

Eliab Kyari – 22

Esther Dang – 26

Dinatu Samson – 45

Brief Profile of Maiduguri Interviewees

- I. **REV. MSHEILIA** (General secretary, CAN, Borno State)
- II. **REV. ISHIRU GARBA** – Minister in Charge, COCIN Church, Regional Headquarters, Maiduguri, Secretary, Regional church Council; Coordinator, CAN Metropolitan)
- III. **REV JOSHUA RUWA ADAMU** (CAN Chairman, Borno State)
- IV. **PASTOR ENOCH ATIYAYE** (Secretary, CAN Metropolitan)
- V. **MR. SIMON CHIA** (Civil Servant, Christian, Married, Not from the state)
- VI. **SHIKH ABBA AJI** (Profound Islamic Scholar and a feminist theologian).
- VII. **SHEIKH ABDULAHI MOHAMMED** (Islamic Scholar; Member, Sharia Implimentation Committee, Borno State)
- VIII. **THE SHEHU OF BORNO** (Traditional Ruler and Religious Leader; Chairman of JNI in the State and Vice chairman of JNI in the country)
- IX. **HAJIYA RABI ADO** (Muslim, a House Wife)
- X. **MALLAMA SAFIA AUWAL** (House wife, Muslim)
- XI. **FGD-Maiduguri**
 1. Umaru Mohammed
 2. Hauwa Mohammed
 3. Maimuna Ahmed
 4. Victoria Yusuf
 5. Ragina Musa
 6. Timothy Alao
 7. Chimezie Okafor
 8. Ladi Ali

APPENDIX II: PLATES



Figure 9 Congo-Russia Mosque, Jos



Figure 2 Mrs. Haruna Dalyop (Right), Jos



Figure 3 Ultra Modern Market, Jos



Figure 4: Emmanuel Maisamari, Jos



Figure 5: Imam Isa Saliu, Jos

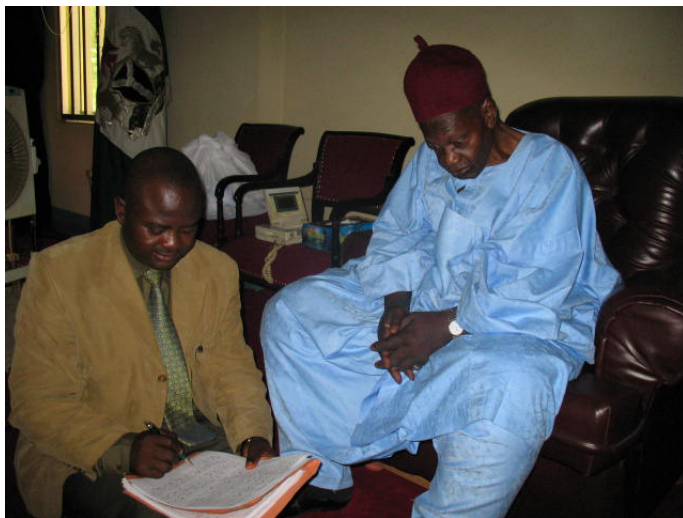


Figure 6: The Shehu of Borno, Maiduguri



Figure 7: The Shehu of Borno (Centre), Maiduguri



Figure 8: Sheikh Abba Aji, Maiduguri



Figure 9: Borno State CAN Chairman, Rev Joshua Ruwa Adamu, Maiduguri

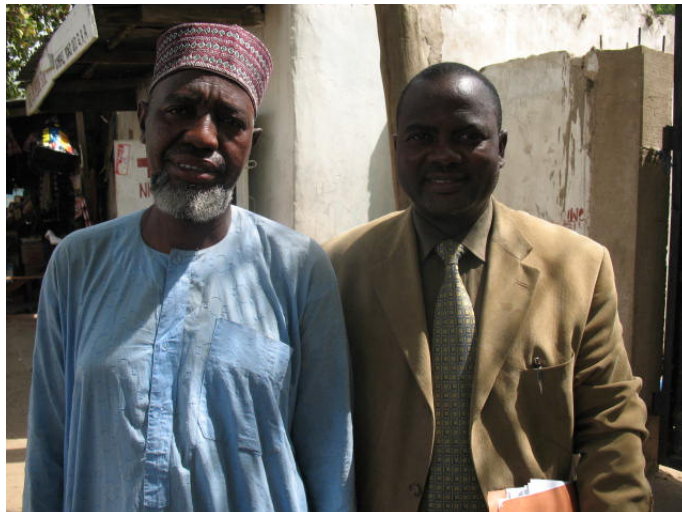


Figure 10: Sheikh Abdullahi Mohammed, Maiduguri